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Sikh Fundamentalism in Canada: The Quest for Khalistan

By

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To M.T.M.R.
For passing on the love of knowledge

Abstract

An overarching power struggle within the Sikh community continues to exist between the ideological blocs of the moderates and the fundamentalists.
In relation to this power struggle, this thesis focuses on the interface of religion and society as manifested in Sikh fundamentalism. Specifically this thesis examines: early Sikh immigration patterns to Canada; early communal struggles; the roots of Sikh militancy and the martyrdom tradition; Sikh militant groups operating in Canada; and finally, Sikh fundamentalism in Canada. As part of Sikh fundamentalism in this country, this thesis specifically examines fundraising and the role of the *gurdwara*, as well as the issue of *Khalistan*. The central research examines what motivations lie behind Sikh fundamentalist movements, and how these movements support or sustain their operations.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

In the first decades of this past century, Canada has provided the scene for an unprecedented divide within the Sikh community. As late nineteenth-century immigrant pioneers, Sikhs not only had to endure the unforgiving bitterness of racist attitudes, but also to bear and sustain harsh cultural transformations. Despite these adverse beginnings, however, the Canadian-Sikh community established itself as a prominent and affluent group within society -- politically, economically, and socially. Internally, the community has developed and transformed over time, and in response to a myriad of events and situations. While today the Canadian-Sikh community is seemingly large and viable, internal strife continues to beleaguer the population.

For India, the early 1980s were a period plagued with political upheaval and mounting dissention among religious groups. Muslim-Indians fought for and won the nation of Pakistan; Hindu nationalism emerged as a powerful force on the political stage; and radical Sikh separatists demanded an independent homeland. At roughly the same time in Canada, the Federation of Sikh Societies became nationally registered, the Khalsa Diwan Society purchased 28 acres of land in Richmond, B.C. to build a sports arena, and Wally Oppal became the first Sikh judge appointed to the Supreme Court. Within the community, however, and far from media scrutiny, an ominous situation was beginning to unfold.

The 1984 bombing of an Air-India flight, which departed from Canada and exploded off the coast of Ireland, suddenly raised suspicions as to the role of the Sikh diaspora community in homeland politics. The faint lines of communal factionalism slowly became public, and soon all Canadians were hearing about the ill-famed battles between Sikh moderates and fundamentalists. Today, the majority of Canadian-Sikhs insist that their religion is one of justice and peace, and a religion that demands communal equality. Despite these insistences, however, an overarching power struggle within the Sikh community continues to exist between the ideological blocs of the moderates and the fundamentalists.

In relation to this power struggle, this thesis focuses on the interface of religion and society as manifested in Sikh fundamentalism. The study of Sikh fundamentalism provides a clear illustration of religion as it unfolds, shapes, and re-creates its identity to satisfy and adapt to the social setting in which it exists. For example, heavy persecution by the Mughal Empire spawned early Sikh extremism. This period of persecution bears witness to a literal shift in the philosophy of the religion–from peace to militancy–with the creation of the *khalsa*, or brotherhood, under the tenth guru, Gobind Singh. Today, the social impact of Sikh fundamentalism has shifted toward the Sikh diaspora, whose adherents use foreign soil to plan, fundraise, and launch various religio-political activities.

In this study, I examine the appearance, development, and consequences of Sikh fundamentalism in Canada. Specifically I examine: early Sikh immigration patterns to Canada; early communal struggles; the roots of Sikh militancy and the martyrdom tradition; Sikh militant groups operating in Canada; and finally, Sikh fundamentalism in Canada. As part of Sikh fundamentalism in this country, I specifically examine fundraising and the role of the *gurdwara*, as well as the issue of *Khalistan*. The central research examines what motivations lie behind Sikh fundamentalist movements, and how these movements support or sustain their operations.

Methods

This research employs two primary methods of data collection, written works (including books, articles, court documents, census data, etc.) and interviews. The first sections of this thesis focus on early Sikh immigration patterns to Canada, together with the history of Sikh militancy, fundamentalism and the martyrdom tradition. As such, I rely heavily on various reference books pertaining to religion in general and Sikhism in particular, books on Sikh history, Canadian immigration and census data, as well as several books and articles that focus on theories of fundamentalism. The remaining sections of this thesis focus more on current movements within the Canadian-Sikh community, and for them I use more contemporary scholarly works and media publications, as well as interviews.

I have encountered some difficulties obtaining material on the subject of Sikh fundamentalism in Canada, in part due to the lack of resources and written works pertaining to this topic. (What few works do exist focus primarily on fundamentalist movements in the United Kingdom.) Also due to the ongoing Air-India trial, together with the ongoing Babbar Khalsa Credit Union investigation by the RCMP, obtaining information from authorities has also proven difficult. In response to these predicaments, I tend to rely more heavily on first-hand data collection, primarily through personal interviews and through court and financial documents.

Interviews

In conducting personal interviews and touring various Sikh temples, I have chosen to focus on three Sikh communities within Canada, located in Edmonton, Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, as well as Winnipeg. I have chosen to focus on interviews derived from these three areas, as I believe that they portray a broad range of attitudes and beliefs. I have chosen to look at Edmonton because it represents a smaller Sikh community (in comparison to Vancouver) and yet it is still associated with various fundamentalist and militant movements, including the infamous Babbar Khalsa. The Sikh communities of Vancouver and the Lower Mainland are important to the study as they represent the largest Sikh population in Canada. They are some of the oldest Sikh settlements in the nation, and as well, these communities are more highly associated with Sikh fundamentalism and militancy than any other Canadian Sikh community. Finally, I have chosen Winnipeg, as it too represents a fairly old and established Sikh community. It, however, does not experience the same divisiveness amongst community members as do Edmonton or Vancouver. As such, I use Winnipeg largely to gain an *insiders* 'outside' opinion on various issues.[1]

My interview questions were open-ended, allowing the participants to answer as briefly or elaborately as they desired. Based on several trial runs, I expected that most interviews would be between 1 hour and 1.5 hours in length, not including a tour of the prayer hall, eating area, and office spaces that I often requested to see. I recruited participants for this project through initial telephone contact to various Sikh temples, (that I located either through local directories or through referrals). I asked all interviewees for their consent in having the interviews tape-recorded, as well as their preference for the use of their real names or pseudonyms in the study. Only I and my advisor, Dr. Stephen A. Kent, have access to full interviews and I keep them in a locked facility off the University of Alberta campus. I presented all participants with a copy of the research proposal as well as a consent form, which they read and signed prior to the interview. The University of Alberta Human Ethics Board granted permission and ethics clearance for this study.

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[1] I use the term *insiders 'outside'* here to denote people who are within a particular tradition, yet apart from many of the controversies prevalent in other segments *of the same* religious tradition.

Results

I interviewed twenty-five participants for the purpose of this study from the three previously mentioned cities (ten from Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, seven from Winnipeg, and eight from Edmonton). Most of the participants in this research study were high-ranking members of Sikh *gurdwaras*, i.e., directors, managers, presidents, and bookkeepers. With the permission of temple directors, I also randomly approached individuals for interviews within the *gurdwaras*. Of the twenty-five whom I interviewed, only five agreed to be tape-recorded, eighteen agreed only to my taking notes, and two refused any sort of documentation but still conversed with me.

Methodological Issues

In beginning this research project, I realized that there were several methodological issues involved, mainly concerning areas of definition and theory. The one issue, however, that continues to trouble me is my ability, as a researcher, to untangle and realign in a methodical way the concepts that I present in this study. More candidly, I continue to wrestle with the complexity of relationships and issues or--borrowing from Blalock and Blalock (1982:28)--if there "is . . . any hope that an extremely large number of miscellaneous facts can be integrated into a small number of rather coherent sets of relationships?" This study does not set out to propose a novel and grand theory about the case of Sikh fundamentalism in Canada. It does, however, bring to the forefront many issues prevalent in our society, but which have received very little academic attention. Given the large number of personal beliefs, explanations, and variables that this study touches upon, it is difficult to imagine that a single theory would embrace them all. As such, I have broken down various facets of the study into more theoretically manageable areas such as militancy, martyrdom, and fundamentalism.

Of particular difficulty for me has been the lack of concise and definite theoretical links between various beliefs and ensuing activities. For example, through the course of my research, I have found that fundraising in the Sikh community does not occur solely to support the Khalistan cause.[2] Monies derived through various fundraising efforts sometimes go towards the maintenance and support of pro-Khalistani groups, *as well* as for the purpose of individual wealth. To further complicate matters, donations of anonymous funds to the *gurdwara* and the collection of money at services are inherent practices of the Sikh faith. As such, there is nothing unusual about a *gurdwara* collecting thousands of dollars in donations in any given month. The problem arises, however, when these funds go towards the financing of illegal and/or militant activities instead of the activities that they claim they are going towards. Thus far, my research has revealed that the practice of fundraising within the *gurdwara* occurs primarily amongst the fundamentalist population of the Sikh community, leading one to question fundamentalists' motives and actions. Although many of the temples that the moderates operate have charitable status and function on an 'open-books' system, some temples under the leadership of fundamentalists have come under scrutiny because of lost and/or misappropriated funds. Some even have had their charitable status revoked. My findings, however, in no way substantiate that temples owned and operated by fundamentalists necessarily misuse funds for illegal purposes, or that fundamentalist temples are inherently associated with militant activities - only that it appears to happen more frequently in the fundamentalist temples, particularly those that are outwardly pro-Khalistani (i.e.,those that endorse the creation of an independent homeland).

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[2] Sikh separatists who feel the need for the establishment of a Sikh sovereign state support the notion of Khalistan. At times, profits from illegal activities provide the financial backing for many pro-Khalistani efforts.

Due to the nature of this research, I have already encountered some difficulties in obtaining and conducting interviews with members of the community. Through conducting various interviews, I have found that people often are open and willing to talk about such things as the premise, nature, and history of Sikhism as a faith, but are quite wary to discuss the social aspects of the religion, including topics such as modern grievances, the split between moderates and fundamentalists, and the issue of fundraising. Interestingly, I found that individuals insisted in going "off the record" when they revealed their personal views regarding the more social aspects of their faith.

In part, it is possible that this hesitation to speak freely is the result of previous incidents regarding Sikh coverage. Members of the fundamentalist community have made threats against *Vancouver Sun* reporter Kim Bolan, editor and author Tara Singh Hayer, federal Minister of Health Ujjal Dosanjh, and University of British Columbia Sikh Studies professor, Harjot Oberoi (among others). Threats issued against these individuals vary in intensity but all come as the result of them either voicing their opinions about Sikh events, or reporting on them. (This fear of reporting also may suggest why such little scholarship exists on current Sikh issues.) In part due to this uncongenial environment, many personal beliefs and actions remain covert, making my job as a researcher (attempting to derive such sensitive information) difficult.

Another problem that I have encountered during the course of my research is that of the insider/outsider (etic and emic) dilemma (discussed by Paden in Braun and McCutcheon, 2000:335). Some members of the Sikh community felt that it was not my responsibility or right to research them, while others felt that I may misrepresent their faith in some way. I clearly understand their concerns and tried to alleviate them to the best of my abilities. The question arises, however, how I will be able to understand the "other" or the "insider" without eliminating those very differences that make them the "other" or the "insider." Furthermore, to what degree can I safely apply Western concepts to explain the worldviews and beliefs of others? The insider/outsider problem is a hermeneutical question that persists in a variety of academic disciplines, but really reaches its apex when related to issues of religiosity and fundamentalist belief. The Sikh community is polarized on many issues, and many adherents have deeply felt convictions for or against certain positions. In part due to these deeply-rooted beliefs, my research required me to approach members of the community with great sensitivity, cultivating a thorough understanding of the grievances and injustices that all sides faced and experienced.

Other methodological issues that I faced in the course of this research involve definition and interpretation. *Definition and interpretation are essential* tools for exploration in the area of religion. In creating various categories, I am able to more accurately and fruitfully discuss various subject matters. The difficulty lies, however, in the creation of unbiased definitions and interpretations. In my area of research, I have difficulty in defining and utilizing terms such as 'fundamentalist,' 'militant,' and 'terrorist' (among others) particularly as they relate to Sikhs and the issue of Khalistan. For instance, can I label as 'terrorist' those Sikhs who believe it to be their religious duty to create and establish and independent homeland? Is the creation of an independent homeland symbolic of fundamentalist ideology?

Furthermore, I found myself consistently wrestling with the links that may or may not exist *among* these category formations. For example, are most Sikh militants intrinsically fundamentalist? Are the majority of Sikh terrorists 'separatists'? Is it possible to be a non-*khalsa* Sikh fundamentalist? Does adhering to the *khalsa* brotherhood suggest extremist tendencies and beliefs? If not, why are the majority of those Sikhs accused of militant activity strict observers of the *khalsa*? While I am not prepared to offer an answer to these questions, I cannot ignore their existence either--and as such, my task is complicated. In order to create a fruitful study, therefore, I worked with the assumption that there are no absolutes in defining the beliefs and actions of the people I study -- no exact cause and effect relationships, and no absolute links. But absolute does not eradicate the probable and the anticipated. Thus, while I do not wish to suggest that all fundamentalists donate money for the purpose of creating an independent homeland, I *do* suggest that it is probable that the majority of those who donate for the purpose of creating an independent homeland are adherents to fundamentalist beliefs.

For the purpose of this study, I have separated the Sikh community into two distinct groups: moderates and fundamentalists. I do not use these terms randomly-- the Sikh community itself employs these terms, and the categorization reproduces the labels used also in the media coverage of it.

Through the course of my investigations and interviews with various members of the community, however, I have learned that the lines of distinction between the two factions are not always clear. While I have encountered many members of the moderate community who refer to certain people and groups as 'fundamentalist,' I have never encountered an alleged fundamentalist who referred to himself as such. In fact, on several occasions, when asked about the media and community's use of the term in describing them, several individuals protested the attachment of a "Western" label onto a non-Western tradition.[3] Furthermore, many of these individuals felt that my outsider position also hindered my ability to accept and understand that practicing their faith in (what they believed to be) a sanctified and dutiful manner did not make them 'fundamentalist.' (Still, I must point out that when I mentioned to the same individuals that others *within* the faith *also* used the same terminology, the individuals wrote off those using the term as being impious and disrespectful.)

Nonetheless, I have found that it is virtually impossible to discuss such occurrences without offending a particular group of people. I have tried my best through the course of this study, to create concise categories in describing particular movements, and offering precise definitions for terms such as 'fundamentalist, 'moderate,' 'militant,' and 'terrorist,' but unfortunately, I have not been able to eliminate completely all hermeneutical shortcomings. To define these terms in any way seems to delimit them, yet to leave them undefined seems to dissolve them as working categories.

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[3] This objection to labelling has been true particularly in relation to the term 'fundamentalism.' In order to justify my use of the expression, I refer to Oberoi (1993:257), who defends the use of 'fundamentalist' (in connection with the Sikh community) on several grounds. According to Oberoi, the term 'fundamentalism' corresponds directly to the term '*mulvad* within the Punjabi language (the official language of the Sikhs). Increasingly, Sikh journalists, scholars, and political figures utilize the term *mulvad* "connoting a polity and society organized on the basis of religious (particularly scriptural) authority" in discussing current religious and political movements. Oberoi also justifies the use of the term 'fundamentalism' in relations to Sikhs on powerful cultural grounds:

> Sikh fundamentalists have no patience for hermeneutic or critical readings of Sikh scriptures. Their scriptural absolutism precludes any secular or rational interpretation of what they consider to be revealed text. . . .It is their [fundamentalists'] firm belief that only those scholars who can strengthen the faith and espouse its 'fundamentals' should study Sikhism (Oberoi, 1993:257).

Furthermore, while many groups appear to be fundamentalist in nature, in reality, fundamentalist movements in existence worldwide are relatively few. The *Fundamentalism Project of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* (AAAS) acknowledges only ten movements that meet the full criteria of a 'fundamentalist' movement. Among these ten is the Sikh extremist movement that seeks to establish an independent homeland (Khalistan) in the Punjab. The AAAS's designation of the term 'fundamentalist' in relation to the Sikh community further justifies my use of the term in this study.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to someone like me who studies Canadian-Sikh fundamentalism may be the approach that one takes to the study of religion. While many scholars of religion do study religion as much as they defend and appreciate it, my area of research differs in its heavy reliance on societal manifestations of religious thought and belief. As such, I argue that occurrences within the Sikh community, ranging from fundraising to murder, are rooted as much in societal forces as they are in religious ideology.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In this chapter, I look ahead to the substantive material in the subsequent sections by highlighting the sources that I used and the limitations that they presented. By examining these sources in a separate chapter, I can discuss the strengths and weakness of their data and arguments but still draw upon them at appropriate places in my own analysis.

Chapter 3 - Sikh Immigration to Canada

Chapter 3 discusses early Sikh immigration trends to North America. Specifically, I focus on the particular districts from which the Sikhs immigrated, the specific areas into which they settled, as well as some of the motivating factors that led to these immigrations. I argue that early racism, unbalanced immigration patterns (primarily due to an immigration ban), and an ability to maintain strong diasporic bonds were early factors that shaped the Sikh community.

The biggest challenge, however, that I encountered when writing this chapter is the lack of precise figures. Early Canadian census and immigration statistics that include religious affiliation did not appear until the late 1940s. Despite the fact that statistics exist regarding individuals coming into Canada, statistics that reflect the number of people who left, or would continuously leave and come back (seasonal migrants), are vague or non-existent. In addition, there are no records of refugee claimants.

In order to establish reliable figures despite these constraints, I depend heavily on early ship records and historical records that trace Indian immigration to highly populated Sikh areas as provided by Statistics Canada and historic Government of Canada documents. Various literatures exist on Indian immigration trends to North America that are quite valuable. Among the pieces that this study makes use of are Buchignani's *Continuous Journey: A Social History of South Asians in Canada* (1985), and Joan Jensen's *Passage from India: Asian Indian Immigrants in North America* (1987). Although both these books examine Asian-Indian immigration trends to North America in general, they are still useful to my study because Sikhs constituted the majority of early Asian-Indian immigrants.

In this chapter, I argue that Sikhs' immigration to Canada occurred due to several key factors, particularly the success of the Punjab's 'green revolution' as well the Sikhs' large-scale participation in oversees army units. Many academic works discuss these reasons for Sikh immigration to North America at length; however, I rely most on Basran and Bolaria (2003), Johnston, H. (1988), Calvert H.H. (1922), and Dhillon (1981), for their accurate and concise historical reports. James Chadney has compiled an interesting study titled *The Sikhs of Vancouver* (1993) that I rely on for information as well. Chadney's work is useful as it clearly outlines specific districts within the Punjab from which immigration was originating. Margaret Walton-Roberts (1996) and Hugh Johnston (1988) are quite helpful in establishing rough estimates for early immigration trends. Both Walton-Roberts and Johnston have conducted extensive research of early ship records as well as settlement patterns, which I find quite useful.

As a part of the chapter on immigration to Canada, I discuss some of the early problems that Sikh émigrés encountered in their new host country. For discussions on racial tensions and early Canadian law, I find that personalized accounts are worthwhile. Newspapers and magazines that date back to the time of early migration reflect the attitudes of citizens in response to Asian migration. Clearly, the laws that the Canadian government implemented during that time also echo the sentiments that many had towards the new migrants. Literature that focuses on these early Canadian attitudes assists in formulating a clear and concise representation of the time period and the struggle that many immigrants faced. Ferguson's (1975) *A White Man's Country,* as well as Hess's (1969) *The Hindu in America*, Sampat-Mehta's (1984) *First Fifty Years of South Asian Immigration,* Sibia's (2004), *Pioneer Asia Indian Immigration to the Pacific Coast* as well as Ward's "The Komagatu Maru Incident" in *White Canada Forever* discuss such factors at great length. Finally, this study relies heavily on the personal accounts of early Sikh migrants recorded in Sarjeet Singh Jagpal's (1994), *Becoming Canadian: Pioneer Sikhs in Their Own Words.*

Chapter 4 - History of Militancy, Martyrdom, and Fundamentalism in Sikhism

As the title suggests, this chapter focuses on the historical and theoretical aspects of Sikh militancy, martyrdom, and fundamentalism. As such, locating definitional meanings for the terms 'militancy' and 'fundamentalism' have been central to this research project. In particular, this chapter explores the theoretical definitions of the term 'fundamentalism.'

In establishing my own definitional framework of 'fundamentalism,' I refer to a few excellent books and articles. Among these, I particularly look to those definitions provided in Appleby's (2000) *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*, Juergensmeyer's (2000) *Terror in the Mind of God*, Beeman's (2001) *Fighting the Good Fight*, Barr's (1977) *Fundamentalism*, Bruce's (2000) *Fundamentalism*, Caplan's (1987) *Studies in Religious Fundamentalism*, and Kaplan's (1992) *Fundamentalism in Comparative Perspective*. Interestingly enough, the definitions provided by these authors are all quite similar and revolve around several key features (i.e., a return to a Golden Age, absolute scriptural authority, etc.). Of particular importance to the existing discourse on fundamentalism are the edited volumes of Martin E. Marty and Scott R. Appleby's (1993-) *The Fundamentalism Project*, out of the University of Chicago. In the introductions to each of these volumes, Marty and Appleby provide thought-provoking and informative discussions on the definition and development of fundamentalism, and they offer a brief definitional basis of the term and its current usage. I have found two articles in Marty and Appleby's Fundamentalism Project exceptionally helpful, particularly for creating a theoretical framework of fundamentalism: "Sikh Fundamentalism: Translating History into Theory" by Harjot Oberoi (1993) and "The Double-edged Sword: Fundamentalism and the Sikh Religious Tradition" by T.N. Madan (1991).

While the term 'militancy' is a label used by one group in describing another, it is not as heavily value-laden as 'fundamentalism,' or 'extremism.' For the purpose of this study, I follow Scott Appleby (2000) in using the *Oxford*

English Dictionary's definition of 'militant.' While Appleby, however, uses a segment of the definition that defines militants as 'war-like,' I opt to use the segment of the definition that defines a militant as one who is "aggressively active in pursuing a political or social cause . . . often favouring extreme, violent, or confrontational methods" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2004).

Militancy is not a new phenomenon in the Sikh faith. Some sources automatically link Sikh militancy to the tenth guru and the establishment of the *khalsa* (Juergensmeyer: 2000). I have come upon several sources, however, that indicate an earlier militant movement. Singh (1994:11) asserts that Sikh militancy actually started with the martyrdom of Guru Arjan. Using historical legends provided by Bhatia and Bakshi (2000a, 2000b), Macauliffe, (1958b), Chabbra (1988), and Singh, Gopal (1988), I illustrate that it was Arjan's son and successor, Guru Hargobind (the man who donned two swords, one representing secular power, the other representing spirituality), who brought Sikh militancy to the forefront.

This chapter also illustrates that Sikh militancy is, if not wholly inherent to the faith, at least a partial ingredient of it. Relying on historical accounts provided mainly by Bhatia and Bakshi (2000a, 2000b), and Macauliffe (1958b), I argue that the pressures that the Sikhs faced under Mughal rulers in India forced them towards the adoption of a militant stance. The greatest example of Sikh militancy is the initiation of the *khalsa* by Guru Gobind Singh (in which the addition of distinguishing symbols and sacraments allowed *khalsa* Sikhs to state their militant belief outwardly). Several works exist that discuss Sikh militant movements, both historical and contemporary. *Political Ideology of the Sikhs* by Bhatia and Bakshi (2000c) suggests that Sikh militancy arose in response to political injustice and turmoil, particularly in the Punjab. Another of Bhatia and Bakshi's publications, *The Sikh Gurus and Sikhism* (2000b) reiterates this early foundational view of Sikh militancy. Proshanata Nandi's (1996) "Socio-Political Context of Sikh Militancy in India" also offers a very extensive economic/political explanation for the existence of Sikh militancy. Unfortunately, however, these latter works tend to omit or disregard the existence of various other contributing factors, which Mahmood (1996) discusses at length. *Faith and Nation* by anthropologist Cynthia Keppley Mahmood (1996) differs slightly from other works by focusing more on the later manifestations of Sikh militancy. Not only does Mahmood suggest that these manifestations are responses to the Indian government, but also she suggests that militant movements arise in response to aggravations and ideological differences amongst various Sikh sects. Utilizing Sikh militants' narratives, Mahmood delivers a very real perspective on the various factors and explanations for Sikh militancy, as provided by militants themselves. Mahmood never claims to have an insider's understanding of the faith. Yet she weaves together lucidly militant accounts, theory, and historical evidence in creating a case for the Khalistani movement. Because this book offers such a different angle on the militant issue, I use it a great deal in creating my own social analysis of the Sikh fundamentalist community.

In discussing the martyrdom tradition, I rely heavily on the works of Louise Fenech (2000), who provides an excellent discussion on the Sikh martyrdom tradition in her book, *Martyrdom in the Sikh Tradition, 'Playing the Game of Love.'* To date, this is the most comprehensive and sophisticated discussion of Sikh martyrdom that I have come across. Several key works exist that discuss the history of martyrdom and the martyrdom tradition, including Lakshman, Singh's (1923) *Sikh Martyrs*, Bhatia and Bakshi's (2000a) *National Movement and the Sikhs: The Martyrdom Tradition*. Fenech's account, however, is superior to these other works in its ability to locate historically the notion of martyrdom, as well as in its ability to extrapolate and suggest links between traditions of martyrdom and Sikh concepts of militancy–a concept other academics often omit or only vaguely cover.

Chapter 5 - Sikh Militant Groups in Canada

Even as literature that explores the nature and history of Sikh militancy is abundant, literature that focuses specifically on the existence, mandates, and actions of Sikh militant groups operating within Canada is essentially non-existent. While there are not entire books and articles devoted to this topic, there are certain pieces that refer (if sometimes briefly) to these issues. Mahmood's (1996) *Fighting For Faith and Nation* discusses several militant groups (largely operating in the West), as does Tatla's (1999) The *Sikh Diaspora: The Search for Statehood*. (In fact, Tatla narrows his discussion of various Sikh groups operating in the West into separate nations.) Most helpful in Tatla's analysis is his discussion of militant groups particularly as they relate to mobilization. Tatla suggests that Sikh organizations are able to mobilize and recruit support particularly through "resources and media" as well as through "rallies and linkages" (Tatla, 1999:143). This reference to resource mobilization becomes an especially crucial point later in my study when I refer to the importance of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale's speeches at numerous rallies conducted across Canada. Ian Mulgrew's (1988) book, *Unholy Terror*, also comes in handy as it provides a worthwhile analysis of the inner-workings and history of the militant Sikh group, the *Babbar Khalsa,* as well as some of their operations in Canada.

Because several of the militant groups that I discuss in the course of this chapter (such as the International Sikh Youth Federation and the Babbar Khalsa) currently are under investigation by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, I depend on various government publications, legal documents, and personal accounts of individuals within the Sikh community with knowledge in the area in providing an analysis of these groups. I also have found Internet sources, (particularly the aforementioned groups' websites), exceptionally informative and instructive.

Chapter 6 - Fundamentalism and the role of the Gurdwara

Like the previous section, the portion of the study that focuses on fundamentalism and the role of the *gurdwara* is hindered greatly by the lack of scholarship in the area. As such, information utilized in this section derive largely from personal interviews, media accounts, as well as several non-academic books.

I rely greatly on *Canadian Sikhs - History, Religion, and Culture of Sikhs in North America* (1994) by author Narindar Singh. Although not an academic text, Singh's study contains a large amount of information pertaining to Sikh history, immigration, conflicts, institutions, and recent events. This book is one of only several that I am aware of that offers in-depth data and analysis on Canadian Sikhs. Of particular note are the vast and detailed appendices that follow the text. In it, Singh (1994) offers a breakdown of Sikh institutions and Sikh conferences in North America. I use this book, however, with caution, as I often find biased and unfounded arguments and analyses. Nevertheless, I do not believe that the author intended to argue any single point regarding Sikh culture or history. He simply tried to gather applicable data and present it in a fashion that is worthwhile to interested parties.

Media sources, such as Kim Bolan's numerous articles in the *Vancouver Sun*, as well as various pieces in *MacLean's* magazine such as John Nicols's (2000), "CSIS and the Sikhs," Ken Macqueen's (2000) "Backroom Boys," and Jennifer Hunter, and Chris Wood's (2000) "Sikh Power," are extremely useful in providing current, Canadian coverage of events beleaguering the Sikh community. In addition, I also have found Stuart Allen Hunter's (2002) article, "Leader Squandering Money: Sikh Sect," in *The Province*, Anthony DePalma's (1997) piece, "Canada's Torn Sikhs: In a Holy Place, Unholy Rage," as well as Peter Hedzipetros' (2001), "The Bombing of Air-India Flight 182: Sikh Militancy," extremely helpful in providing a 'no holds barred' version of events within the Canadian Sikh community.

Naturally, as with all good media sources, the authors of these articles have presented stories consistently and in a very factual and dispassionate manner. Relying heavily on neutral material, however, also has its downfalls.

The reasoning and analysis that generates academic literature is largely lacking in media sources, and as such, I attempt to complement many of these 'factual accounts' with personal interviews. In doing so, I hope to infuse somewhat the 'personal' element into an area of discourse that otherwise misses such insights.

This chapter also discuss Sikh fundamentalism in relation to the proposed Sikh homeland of *Khalistan*. The Khalistan issue continues to create deep rifts within the Sikh community, especially between fundamentalists and moderates. Numerous books and articles speak to the historical battle over Khalistan and the political affairs of Sikhs living in India. Unfortunately, due to the covert nature of fundraising, little literature exists that speaks directly to the financial support of such a cause. I have separated literature pertaining to Khalistan into two distinct groups: those works that directly endorse, and (more often that not) serve as propaganda for the Khalistan cause, and those works that view the Khalistan phenomenon through a more historical, unbiased, and academic lens.

Ian Mulgrew's (1988) *Unholy Terror* discusses the Khalistan issue with great impartiality. Although Mulgrew does not go into depth explaining current struggles, he does offer a brief but insightful synopsis of the issues surrounding Khalistan, such as its historical development as well as some of its proponents. Mahmood (1996), in *Faith and Nation*, poignantly discusses the brutal treatment of Sikhs living in India, and the ensuing Sikh struggle for the creation of a homeland. Mahmood's work is of particular importance because she aptly allows for the separatists' side of the Khalistan debate to emerge. Mahmood's use of emotive testimonials from a number of Sikh separatists illustrates not only the desire for, but also the obligation to, Khalistan that many Sikhs feel. Several other works that I rely on for their worthy discussions and analyses (particularly historical) on the issue of Khalistan are, Meredith Weiss's (2002) "*The Khalistan Movement in Punjab*," Giorogio Shani's (2000) "*Beyond Khalistan? The Sikh Diaspora and the International Order*," and Brian Keith Axel's (2001), *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora*."

Other sources that I have located, which are informative but, whose objectivity I question, include, Satinder Singh's *Khalitsan: An Academic Perspective* (1982), Sekhon and Dilgeer's *A White Paper on Khalistan: the Sikh Nation* (1999), and D.H. Butani's *The Third War: Towards or Away from Khalistan*? (1986). While these books shed considerable light onto the plight of the Sikhs, they are either quite biased and/or loaded with religious propaganda. Sekhon and Dilgeer's (1999) publication is of particular interest as it not only offers a very fundamentalist viewpoint, (linking the establishment of Khalistan to the religious duty of all pious Sikhs), but also it embodies the frustration and loathing that many Sikh fundamentalists feel towards the Indian government. (In pro-Khalistani publications such as Sekhon and Dilgeer's it is common to find very graphic descriptions of brutal acts committed by Indian officials against Sikhs. These publications use striking images such as, for example, Sikhs having their "stomachs cut open by pincers," "eyes gouged out with a knife," and "beards shaved off," and Sikhs being "crushed under a train" as a means of justifying the need for an independent homeland (Sekhon and Dilgeer, 1999:47).

In addition to these sources, I also rely quite heavily on current Khalistani websites for information and current updates of various functions, events, speakers, press releases, etc. Among those that I have found most useful are websites belonging to, The Council of Khalistan (www.khaslitan.net), the Khalistan Affairs Center, www.khalistan-affairs.org), Khalistan.biz (www.khalistan.biz/), and Khalistani Lionz (www. http://www.khalistan.8m.com/).

Chapter 3 - Sikh Immigration To Canada

The Sikh diaspora is a sizeable one, numbering well over one million. Nearly three quarters of these diaspora Sikhs live in one of three countries: The United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. With an overall population of 16 million (Tatla, 1999:11), the number of oversees Sikhs is significant. Especially within the past four decades, no other state[4] has seen the migration of so many citizens abroad (Tatla, 1999:41). So large is the Sikh diaspora community that it has taken on a comical stance: some Sikhs joke that when Neil Armstrong landed on the moon in 1969 a Sikh was already there asking the astronaut if he needed a taxi (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004). To explain the ubiquitous nature of the diaspora community, this chapter examines Sikh immigration trends to Canada. The application of various discriminatory legislations and acts, the later revocation of these same laws, in combination with various external factors (such as the 1947 partition of India and the resulting political unrest) has created an interesting pattern of Sikh migration.

The task of determining accurate immigration figures, unfortunately, is particularly difficult due to the lack of early government documentation of Sikh immigrants and refugees. First, although Canadian statistics provide numbers of immigrants coming from India dating as far back as the 1950s, these figures only provide information for the country of last residence--not for religious affiliation. Thus, we must use different sources (such as boat records) to ascertain roughly how many of these migrants were Sikh. Second, early statistics do not account for refugee claimants. Sikh refugees are an important facet to the diaspora community as they come with the most political grievances. Finally, statistics do not clearly reveal the movement of individuals in and out of the country. As with the Sikh community, many individuals were seasonal migrants who traveled frequently between Canada and India, yet census data does not reveal this constant movement.

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[4] Here, state refers to the state of Punjab in India, where the majority of Sikhs reside.

Despite these shortcomings, I draw from various sources in order to provide an overview of Sikh emigration trends to Canada and the early lives of these pioneers. In doing so I suggest that the Canadian Sikh émigré population remained tightly-knit and assimilated minimally into mainstream society due to exclusionary and racist Canadian policies. Later chapters will explore how these early factors helped shaped present-day Canadian-Sikh fundamentalism.

Early Immigration

Sikh migration to North America occurred in two distinct waves, the first in the 1900s and the second during the 1950s. Between the years 1903 and 1908, roughly 5000 Sikhs immigrated to Canada (Chadney 1984: 26; Johnston 1988: 296; Muthanna, 1975). Based on reports issued by the Dillingham Commission[5] (which in 1911 completed a forty-one volume report on immigration for the American Congress) and information gathered from old ship records, roughly 90 to 95 percent of the population that immigrated to Canada from India before WWII was from the Punjab.

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[5] Creation of the Dillingham Commission was for the purpose of investigating and examining immigration during the 2nd and 3rd sessions of the 61st Congress. Immigration reports of the Dillingham Commission include detailed analyses of immigration both in the United States and elsewhere and contain items such as: immigration statistics, emigration and immigration trends, migrant occupations, and living conditions.

The Dillingham Commission estimated that between 1903 and 1908, approximately 85 percent of immigrants to Canada were Sikhs, and of that 85 percent, roughly 90 percent of them were *Jat*[6] Sikhs (Buchignani and Indra, 1985: 11, Singh, Narindar 1994: 30). The population seemed to come primarily from the areas of east central Punjab--Hoshiarpur, Jullundur, Ludhaina, Ferozepore, and Amritsar (Buchignani, 1985: 11; Johnston, 1988: 297-299). (Areas north of the Sutlej River are collectively referred to as Doaba, and include the districts of Jalandhar and Hoshiarpur, while areas south of the Sutlej River are referred to as Mawla and contain the districts of Ludhiana and Ferozepur.) While immigration to Canada was not reserved to any particular area of the Punjab, records indicate that a large portion of migrants were native to Doaba (Chadney, 1984: 30; please refer to appendix 1).

Based on a sample of East Indian immigrants who entered the United States via Canada, the Dillingham Commission concluded that 23 (5%) were under the age of eighteen, and 288 (61%) were eighteen-to-thirty years of age. Ship records show that among 1,372 immigrant men who landed in Victoria in October and November of 1907, 1,223 (89%) fell between the age range of eighteen and thirty (U.S. Senate, 1911). Reports also indicate that none of the migrants were below the age of eighteen, and that 47 (3.8%) were thirty-five and older. Both the Dillingham Commission and historic ship records suggest that a large majority of these migrants were married and had wives back home (Chadney, 1984; Johnston, 1988).

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[6] *Jats* are members of the peasant class residing in the Punjab and other areas of northern India and Pakistan. People often view *Jats* as the stronger and more dominant class of Sikhs.

Due to various immigration restrictions, and the discrimination that many East Indian migrants experienced in Canada, Sikh immigration to Canada steadily declined. Between 1908 and 1920, 118 Indian immigrants entered the country. Between 1909 and 1913, the government admitted only 29 people, followed by another 88 in 1914 (Basran and Bolaria, 2003: 99). (Unfortunately, early Canadian statistics are not helpful in identifying or explaining post-migration movement. The immigration department never gathered information on emigration or returning immigration, reporting instead only on first-time entries into the country.)

Several reasons exist about why (at least initially) such a large number of Sikhs were able to immigrate to Canada. First, economic conditions in the Punjab at the time facilitated migration. By 1903, the Punjabi railway system had expanded from 400 miles to 3000 miles, and operations of irrigation canals saw a growth from 2,744 miles to 16,893 miles (Calvert, 1922:107). Due to large exports (particularly of wheat), the Punjab also controlled a great portion of Indian trade by 1904 (Johnson, 1988: 298). With this type of economic growth and prosperity, immigration and its associated expenses became a reality for many residents of the Punjab.

Many recognized the *Jat* Sikhs of Doaba, in particular, as enterprising, energetic, and ambitious people. Through the accumulation of large amounts of capital and land wealth, many young *Jat*s from Doaba had the resources necessary to make the voyage to Canada. The Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1901 further assisted many Sikh peasants in reducing the power of moneylenders over mortgaged lands, an act that greatly contributed to their economic well-being. As a consequence of the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, land prices fell by 18% but quickly recovered to reach a considerably high sum of ninety-eight rupees an acre in 1907 (Johnston, 1988: 298).

Second, in part due to their history of militancy and bravery, Sikhs (particularly *Jat* Sikhs) always had played an essential role in military movements, and the Punjab had become a favoured region for recruitment by the Imperial army. From 1858 to about the time of the First World War there was an increase in Sikh regiments, especially those based oversees (Tatla, 1999: 44). Thus, many scholars and historians credit the beginnings of Sikh migration to Canada to a detachment of Sikh army personnel. Many Sikhs who were members of the detachment passed through Canada after parading in London on the occasion of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The country left a positive impression on them and they spoke highly of it upon their arrival back in India (Chadney, 1984: 27; Johnson, 1988: 297).

Settlement trends indicate that the majority of Sikh migrants settled in British Columbia and made a living working primarily in lumber, sawmills, and railway construction (Dutton, 1989; Johnston 1988:301; Sampat-Mehta 1984). Earlier immigrants (those arriving between 1903 and 1906) were able to find work quickly, but subsequent immigrants were not so lucky. According to several accounts, earlier Sikh migrants often grossly exaggerated reports of work and economic stability to forthcoming immigrants, and while many Sikhs were able to find work in areas of lumber and railway construction, others were not so fortunate.

Besides unstable employment, many early Sikh migrants faced other difficulties. Language problems, poor education, inaccessibility to medical care, substandard living conditions and the constant threat of racial discrimination and segregation made the transition to Canada difficult. More adversely, however, many Sikhs located themselves in the midst of a politically unfriendly environment. The mayor and council of Vancouver tried to hinder the entry of Sikhs into Vancouver by setting up a police cordon, choosing instead to board Sikhs upon trains headed for the interior. On the federal level, two Vancouver Members of Parliament petitioned Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier to stop the influx of Sikh migrants coming to Canada.

In 1907, the Sikhs faced another blow when the government of British Columbia passed a bill disenfranchising all natives not born of Anglo-Saxon parents. As a result, Sikhs were unable to gain Canadian citizenship status (thereby denying them the right to vote in government elections). The bill also barred Sikhs from becoming school or improvement district trustees, from provincial public office, and from serving on juries, and while the bill did not explicitly restrict Sikhs from public service, such a restriction nonetheless became the implicit rule. Historic accounts indicate that public work contracts prohibited the employment of Sikh personnel. The government also prohibited Sikhs from attending or practising professions such as law and pharmacy (Becoming Canadian, Section 2). Following implicit custom, many individuals forbade Sikh migrants access to stores and various businesses. Alienation also was a physical reality. Many Sikh migrants lived in closed-off neighbourhoods--a direct result of provincial legislation banning them from purchasing property in certain areas of Vancouver (Singh, Narindar 1994: 31).

In 1907, with staunch determination, a number of individuals created the Asiatic Exclusion League (AEL) in San Francisco. The movement opened several chapters in Canada, including one, spearheaded by Henry Herbert Stevens (1878-1973), in Vancouver. (Stevens later became a Member of Parliament in 1911.) As part of its mandate, the AEL promoted discrimination against people of Asiatic descent, claiming "'Canada is best left in the hands of the Anglo-Saxon race . . . It shall remain white and our doors shall be closed to the Asians'" (quoted in Singh, Narindar 1994:34). The government continued to take measures to halt the "tide of turbans" (Tatla, 1999:52) and on January 8, 1908, legislators implemented a "continuous journey" stipulation for all immigrants to Canada. As part of the legislation, all migrants seeking entry into Canada had to come by continuous journey and with through-tickets from their country of birth or citizenship. In addition, the act required immigrants from India to have on them $200 (while for immigrants coming from Europe it was only $25). This motion greatly affected the Sikhs in particular, as it was a virtual impossibility to travel from India to Canada in one continuous voyage. The act restricted Indian immigration tremendously: between 1908 and 1920, only 118 immigrants entered Canada from India (Sibia, 2004). Despite this sharp decline in numbers, anti-Asian attitudes were at an all-time high, and many released their racial mind-sets in song:

> To orient grasp and greed
> We'll surrender, no ever.
> Our watchword the 'God save the King'
> White Canada for ever (quoted in Ferguson, 1975; Hess, 1969).

The government continued to stand firm on its immigration policies. When the *Monteagle* docked in Canada in February 1908, the government deported nearly all of the 186 South Asian passengers for various reasons (Johnston, 1988:298).

Early Assimilation

Opinions and evidence differ over levels of assimilation by immigrant Sikhs into Canadian society. Some literature (Bains, 1977) suggests that early Sikh migrants integrated wholly into their new environments. Bains (1977:36) points out that slow communication methods made it difficult to keep in close contact with family and friends back in the Punjab, thereby cutting them off from their "sources of inspiration." Bains (1977:36) also suggests that early Sikh migrants were quick to abandon not only their traditional attire (including the turban), opting instead for "western wear," but also that they readily abandoned Sikh *Rahat Maryada* (Sikh code of discipline).

The contention that early Sikh immigrants readily assimilated into Canadian society, however, may over-generalize from the experiences of a few. Much evidence points to non-assimilation practices and processes (Basran and

Bolaria, 2003; Chadney, 1984; Johnston, 1988; Singh, Narindar 1994). Historical records, for example, indicate that as early as 1911 there was considerable movement between Canada and the Punjab. Reports suggest that in 1911 alone, 300 East-Indians left Canada for India. It was common for many men to work in Canada while raising families back home in India, continuously traveling between the two nations. (Johnston [1988: 307] points out that the births of Canadian immigrants' children in India occurred over many years, suggesting constant travel between Canada and that country.) More often than not, having spouses and children back home meant constant ties with family and nation for many of these early Sikh migrants. These constant ties, in turn, contributed to the affirmation and maintenance of Sikh identity.

Establishment of early Sikh temples and societies also helped maintain a strong sense of culture and in-group identity. Building of the Vancouver Sikh temple (on West 2nd Avenue) commenced in 1908, followed soon after by the Victoria temple, the Abbotsford temple, and the New Westminster temple (all established in 1912). A smaller Sikh temple was set-up in Paldi (Vancouver Island) in 1918. Sikhs residing in Nanaimo and Golden, B.C. also built temples in their areas around the same time. Aside from being centres for religious worship, Sikh temples also became a "home away from home" for many immigrants. The *gurdwara* served as a communal social space where people gathered to socialize, have a meal, and occasionally stay in if they had no place of residence (Basran and Bolaria, 2004:107).

In addition to the development of temples, the Sikh émigré population also formed the *Khalsa Diwan Society*. Inaugurated in March 13, 1909 in Vancouver, the mandate of the *Khalsa Diwan Society* was to teach and promote the Sikh way of life, and to oversee the proper functioning of Sikh *gurdawaras*. The Society also played an integral part in securing Sikh rights in the face of growing discrimination in Canada. It campaigned for Sikh rights at all levels of government, and was pivotal in the dismantling of the 1908 continuous voyage legislation. The formation of societies (such as the *Khalsa Diwan Society*) and religious centres allowed the Sikh immigrant population to maintain a sense of identity and group solidarity, but more importantly allowed the Sikh immigrant population to reside in Canada without a great deal of assimilation.

Two events in Canadian Sikh history, however, catalyzed a period of factionalism. The arrival and deportation of the ship, the *Komagata Maru*, and the martyrdom of Mewa Singh (which I discuss below) formalized notions of racial discrimination for many Canadian Sikhs. As the community became increasingly aware of their second-rate status in Canadian society, they were forced to rely on in-group solidarity to affirm their presence. These incidents, therefore, facilitated community adhesion and strength -- key traits of early Sikh migrants.

The Komagata Maru Episode

On May 9, 1910, the Order in Council released the following statement reiterating the 1908 continuous journey provision:

> From and after the date here of the landing in Canada shall be, and the same is hereby prohibited of any immigrants who have come to Canada

> otherwise than by continuous journey from the country of which they are natives or citizens and only through tickets purchased in that country or prepaid in Canada (quoted in *British Columbia Magazine*, 1919: 665).

Earlier, legislators had earlier designed the continuous journey provision of the 1908 Immigration Act to curb the flow of Indian migrants. Under this provision, immigration officials could refuse entry to anyone who did not arrive in Canada by continuous journey from his or her country of origin. Under increasing pressure from the Canadian government, shipping companies systematically refused to sell tickets from India to Canada, making it virtually impossible for Indian citizens to come to Canada under the terms of the new legislation (Johnson, 1989: 4).

In 1914, Baba Gurdit Singh, a wealthy Sikh businessman, chartered the steamer *Komagata Maru* to transport Indian immigrants to Canada in direct challenge to the continuous voyage act. The ship consisted of 376 people (340 Sikhs, 12 Hindus, and 24 Muslims). The British and Canadian press picked up news of the ship's voyage to Vancouver. For several months the Vancouver daily newspaper, *The Province*, published demeaning news reports of the *Komagata Maru's* arrival under headings such as "Boat Loads of Hindoos [sic] on Way to Vancouver" (Sibia, 2004). Sentiments towards the en-route immigrants were, for the most part, hostile if not downright malicious.

Examples of these articles are numerous. For instance, a writer for the *Vancouver Sun* stated about the passengers of the *Komagata Maru*:

> Few emigrant bands in history have come so far to be sent back. They are

> rejected not because they are an outland people, but because they come from a strange part of the world where men's skins are not only pigmented, but their hearts also. It is not the brown skins, but the brown mind that makes them unwelcome (*Vancouver Sun*, 1914b:4).

In another issue a writer for the paper stated:

> On Saturday the desperados on the ship are said to have formed a secret organization, each member of which took a solemn pledge not leave Vancouver harbour alive. The agreement was drawn upon writing and signed by six red hand prints in regular-Oriental secret society style. The prints are those of the right hands of six men who are sworn leaders, and it is said that their hands were dipped in real blood. It is hard for matter-of-fact minds, unaccustomed to things set in a key of fantasy, to take this kind of thing seriously, but these coffee coloured Sikhs are quite capable of a desperate enterprise of this kind. Our minds are not primitive enough to take in the extent of their fanaticism (*Vancouver Sun*, 1914a:3).

In another scathing article, a writer for the *Vancouver Sun* described a Sikh man: "He was scantily and dirtily clothed, and he had the look of a lost dog. Though it was the close season for fleas, he scratched himself as he spoke some baffling English" (*Vancouver Sun,* 1914c:2). Examples of these articles are numerous, and while they are demeaning, they unquestionably reflect the attitudes of the time.

On May 23, the *Komagata Maru* dropped anchor in Burrard Inlet, but the welcome was less than enthusiastic. Of the 376 passengers only twenty-two could prove with valid documentation that they were citizens of Canada and thus disembarked. The rest of the passengers were forced to stay on board. Immigration officials argued that none of the passengers met the continuous passage requirement because the ship had departed from Hong Kong and that the voyage was under-funded with an installment of $15,000 due on the charter. Provisions aboard were minimal, and passengers went without food and water for lengths of time. Immigration officials kept the passengers isolated, refusing to let passengers off board, or to let anyone else go on board. Vancouver's Punjabi community assisted by raising the funds needed to pay for the charter, and also by sending a constant supply of food.

Despite continuous protest efforts by Sikhs in Canada and the Punjab, the government remained firm on its decision to refuse the *Komagata Maru*. As the provincial premier publicly stated regarding the incident, "'to admit Orientals in large numbers would mean in the end the extinction of the white peoples and we have always in mind the necessity of keeping this a white man's country'" (Sir Richard McBride, quoted in Mulgrew, 1988: 97).

Together, Singh and eleven other members of the community were quick to form the "Shore Committee" and mounted a court challenge. The committee was able to raise $70,000 to maintain the *Komagata Maru* in Canada while court proceedings were underway. Despite efforts, however, the Supreme Court of Appeals ruled against Singh and the committee, and ordered the ship back to

India two months after its initial arrival on the Canadian shore. On July 23, 1914, the *Komagata Maru* departed Canadian waters with the accompaniment of an armed Royal Canadian escort. Security personnel were on hand upon the ship's arrival in Calcutta and about 250 passengers, believed to be pro-independence demagogs, were rounded up. In a moment of confusion, 20 of the passengers, 16 of whom were Sikhs, were shot and killed by the police.

The *Komagata Maru* incident was an important episode in immigration policy. On the one hand, it zeroed in on the existing incongruities between democracy and equality, and on the other hand, it revealed the racist ethos of Canadian legislation and politics toward immigrant minorities. Arguably, the episode of the *Komagata Maru* strengthened Indian nationalism while fracturing Sikh relations with Canada. While the episode is now ninety years old, Canadian-Sikhs have hardly forgotten it. Many *gurdwaras* have pictures depicting the event side by side with various other pictures of Sikh heroes and martyrs, and many *gurdwaras* (particularly in the Lower Mainland) recognize the anniversary of the episode annually (Mann, Inderjit [pseud.], 2004; Sidhu, Sandeep [pseud.], 2004). Today, plaques near the Gateway to the Pacific in Vancouver, as well as at the Ross Street *Gurdwara* in Vancouver, stand as reminders of the discrimination and exclusion that many early Sikh migrants experienced. (Please refer to appendix 2.)

The Martyrdom of Mewa Singh

Another episode that occurred around the same time as the *Komagata Maru* that shaped Canadian Sikh consciousness was the martyrdom of Mewa

Singh. Following the departure of the *Komagata Maru*, resentment against Canadian officials was high within the Sikh community. Because of several acts of violence between members of the Sikh community and Canadian officials, the Department of Immigration recruited police officer William Hopkinson to infiltrate the Sikh community in Vancouver. Hopkinson's chief assistant was a man by the name of Bela Singh. Violence broke out between Bela Singh and members of the Sikh community who accused him of being a government operative.

Hopkinson volunteered to testify on behalf of Bela Singh, whom the courts were holding on charges of murder of several Sikhs. Hopkinson's willingness to testify angered many Sikhs and further heightened the existing tension between Sikhs and government officials. On October 21, 1914, the priest of a local *gurdwara*, Mewa Singh, shot and killed Hopkinson. To the grave disappointment of many of his followers, the courts sentenced Singh to death for his crime. Mewa Singh, much to the glory of his followers, never faltered and continued to profess that his faith justified his crime. Prior to his execution on January 11, 1915, Mewa Singh made the following confessional statement:

> 'My religion does not teach me to bear enmity with anybody, no matter what class, creed, or order he belongs to, nor had I any enmity with Hopkinson. I heard that he was oppressing my poor people very much. . . . I – being a staunch Sikh – could no longer bear to see the wrong done both to my innocent countrymen and the Dominion of Canada. . . . And I, performing the duty of a true Sikh and remembering the name of God, will proceed towards the scaffold with the same amount of pleasure as the

> hungry babe does towards its mother. I shall gladly have the rope put around my neck thinking it to be a rosary of God's name. . . .' (as related in Chadney, 1984:28-29).

The martyrdom of Mewa Singh not only stirred the passions of the Sikh immigrant community, but also strengthened their "in-group identification" (Chadney, 1984:27). Even today, Canadian Sikhs recognize Mewa Singh as a hero and as one of the first Canadian Sikh martyrs. As a testimony to his significance within the community, the main recreation room at the Ross Street Temple bears his name, and many Sikhs (particularly in the Lower Mainland) observe the day of his execution yearly with large ceremonies held in *gurdwaras* (Dhaliwal, Hardip [pseud.], (2004); Mann, Inderjit [pseud.], (2004); Sidhu, Sandeep [pseud.], (2004). According to some members of the community, the incidents of the *Komagata Maru* and the 'martyrdom' of Mewa Singh strengthened the resolve of immigrant Sikhs to remain closed-off from the "white community" in which they resided (Mann, Inderjit [pseud.], 2004).

Largely because of Canada's harsh immigration practices and discriminatory labour policies, many early Sikh pioneers lacked any sort of family life. Prior to the Second World War, migrants were predominantly male. Immigration policies made it particularly difficult for spouses and children to come to Canada. Members of the Canadian community who felt that Sikhs were incapable of assimilating into Canadian society championed support for this type of strict immigration policy. By restricting the migration of Sikh women and children, the Canadian government ensured that the Sikh men who did reside in

Canada would not remain, but rather would remain as transient workers who would eventually return to the Punjab. Mackenzie King's 1908 report on Indian immigration echoes these sentiments:

> 'It was clearly recognized in regard to emigration from India to Canada that the native of India is not a person suited to this country, that accustomed as many of them are to the conditions of a tropical climate, and possessing manners and customs so unlike our own people, their inability to readily adapt themselves to surroundings entirely different could not do other than entail an amount of privation and suffering. . . .' (King in House of Commons, 1908:7-8).

Approximately 5000 men immigrated to Canada before the Second World War, while only 400 Indian women and 423 Indian children immigrated during the same time period (Smith, 1944). Lack of women meant that very few Canadian-East-Indian children were born during the early years of the twentieth century. Prior to the World War II there were only approximately fifteen conjugal families in B.C. (Mayer, 1959: 2). Moving entire families to Canada proved a difficult task for several reasons. As Johnston (1988:309) states:

> It cost more to maintain a family in Canada than in India. While wages were good, employment for Indians was limited, and the situation was insecure for the Sikh community as a whole and for individuals within it. The social environment was alien and hostile and the pull of home and village strong.

On these grounds, many men arrived in Canada, leaving their spouses behind.

Post World War II Immigration

Sikh migration to Canada saw its second large wave in the post World War II era. In 1952 the government implemented a quota of 150 migrants from India, and later raised the number to 300 in 1957 (Bolaria and Li, 1988:173; Johnston, 1988:310-311). Until 1967 immigration numbers remained relatively small (amounting to nearly 1000 in 1964 and a little over 2000 between 1965 and 1966 [Basran and Bolaria, 2003: 104]). In 1967, however, there was a large shift in immigration policies that led to a surge of Sikh migrants into Canada. Around this time, Canada began to accept immigrants based on a sophisticated points system. Canadian immigration awarded points to individuals based on a certain set of criteria such as age, education, occupational demand, skill, knowledge of language, adaptability, and proof of funds (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2002).

The introduction of the points system attracted a different type of migrant. While earlier Sikh immigrants primarily were laborers, the newer Sikh migrants were professionals, although this trend too was not long-standing. Professional migrants from India fell drastically from 42.6 percent between 1968 and 1972 to 1.5 percent between 1983 and 1984 (Basran and Bolaria, 2003:105). The number of independent migrants also decreased while the number of relative-sponsored immigrants increased. (Approximately 94 percent of Indian immigrants in 1984 were sponsored relatives [Tatla, 1999:57]). The chain migration resulted in an increase of roughly 7000 South Indians in 1961 to 67,710 Sikhs in 1981. (Of these, 22,392 Sikhs settled in Vancouver.)

In 1951, Canadian Sikhs were successful in petitioning the Canadian government for the right to bring in fiancés. By 1955, 16 brides and 14 grooms immigrated to Canada. By 1961 most of the first-generation Canadian-born Sikhs had reached marriageable age. Despite their growing integration into Canadian society, parents still sought partners for these youths in the Punjab, according to caste and status conditions. In part due to the increase in intercontinental unions, as well as the country's modified immigration laws (which allowed for the sponsoring of family members including children, parents, and siblings), *Canada's Punjabi-origin population grew considerably.*

Conditions in Canada also had changed significantly since the settlement of earlier Sikh pioneers. Historical accounts reveal a much friendlier and more accommodating country, and Sikhs arriving post-1960 faced much less hostility in their new environment (Singh, Narindar 1994:71). The largest shift in immigration took place between 1971 and 1980. While immigration between 1961 and 1970 was 8,195, this number more than quadrupled between the years of 1971 to 1980 to nearly 36,725 (with another 44,490 migrants arriving between 1981 and 1990 [Statistics Canada, Catalogue # 97F0022XCB01004]). Most likely, these numbers reflect the growing periods of unrest in the Punjab at the time (which led to many Sikhs fleeing abroad), coupled with more relaxed immigration policies.

Post-1984 immigration particularly warrants careful analysis, as this is the period that indicates a growing unrest and militant activity in India. Starting in the 1980s, the Punjab became home to an unprecedented level of political mobilization and violence (Jiwa, 1986:189). In response to the growing violence in the Punjab, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered a full-scale military attack on the Golden Temple. The event incited violence between security forces and civilians with a "bullet for bullet" policy (Tatla, 1999:58). Arbitrary killings and the massacre of many innocent Sikhs following the 1984 assassination of Indira Gandhi created an environment of intolerable ferocity, and, understandably, many Sikhs sought to escape.

Unfortunately, the task of ascertaining the number of Sikh refugees entering Canada during these turbulent times is a formidable one. (Until recently Canadian Statistics did not tabulate refugee status in relation to religion.) In fact, few scholarly works even allude to Indian refugees and their settlement in Canada. The few records that are available, however, reveal that in the 1980s and 1990s, Indian refugees totalled less than 1000, until 1996 when the Canadian government admitted 1,241 refugees. Between 1981 and 1984, 2,800 Sikhs applied for asylum but the then-Conservative government of Canada ordered them deported (Tatla, 1999:60). In perhaps the most famous set of Indian refugee cases, 173 men, one woman, and one child (all believed to be Sikhs) arrived in Canada in the southwest coast of Nova Scotia in July 1987, aboard the ship *Amelie* (Richer, 2004). The opposition government at the time used the incident to justify the strengthening and tightening of immigration and regulation laws to prevent future incidents such as this one from happening again.[7]

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[7] A number of asylum seekers aboard the *Amelie* were granted refugee status and settled in large urban centers with established Indo-Canadian communities.

During the height of the Punjab turmoil and shortly following the storming of the Golden Temple, the Indian Consul in Vancouver reported that 15 to 20 percent of total Indian immigration to Canada went undocumented, suggesting another stock of refugee seekers (Unna, 1985:30). Scholars also suggest that asylum seekers coming from India to Canada during this time primarily were young, and had significant political grievances, and their settlement into the established Canadian-Sikh society caused some tension (particularly with respect to the fundamental practice of religion [Unna, 1985; Walton-Roberts, 2003:242]).

Sikhs in Canada - Present Day

At present, Canada plays host to approximately 278,410 Sikhs (a rise of 89 percent from the last census in 1991). From this number, approximately 98,650 are Canadian born, 176,045 are foreign born (Statistics Canada, Catalogue # 97F0022XCB01004). Sikhs accounted for 5 percent of the 1.8 million immigrants entering Canada in the 1990s. The median age of Sikhs in Canada is 30, fairly young when compared to the national age median of Canada, 37 (Statistics Canada, Catalogue # 96F0030XIE2001015). (There are approximately 52,500 Canadian-Sikhs between the ages of 25 and 34 [Statistics Canada, Catalogue # 95F0450XCB01004].)

The majority of the Sikh population still resides in B.C. and Ontario. In fact, B.C. has seen a substantial growth in the number of Sikhs. The 2001 Census reports an estimated 135,300 (an increase of 81.5 percent from the 1996 census) Sikhs residing in B.C., home to nearly one-half of Canada's Sikh population (Statistics Canada Catalogue # 96F0030XIE2001015). (Ontario made up the second biggest population, home to nearly 38% of all Sikhs. Please refer to appendix 3.) Sikh immigration to Canada nearly doubled from 44,490 between 1981 and1990 to peak at 85,345 between 1991 and 2001. Between 1996 and 2001, only 43,515 Sikhs immigrated to Canada (Statistics Canada, Catalogue # 97F0022XCB01004).

The characteristics of Sikhs immigrants have changed drastically as well. Whereas before 1951 the majority of Sikh immigrants to Canada were general labourers, today the number of professionals and individuals with skilled occupations is increasing. This change reflects, in large part, new Canadian immigration standards and the implementation of the points system.

Canadian Sikhs comprise a well-established and thriving community. The opinion that few Sikhs have managed to assimilate into Canadian society (Singh, Narindar, 1994:117) is unsubstantiated. Sikhs permeate all aspects of Canadian life, with individuals representing areas as varied as politics (Ujjal Dossanjh, Herb Dhaliwal, and Jasbeer Singh) to sports (Olympic figure skater Emanuel Sandhu) to media (former Much Music host Monica Deol). Their growing participation within Canadian society, however, has not lessened their religious and cultural affections. At present, there are roughly one hundred *gurdwaras* across Canada, together with numerous societies, organizations, youth groups, and media outlets.[8]

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[8] Many credit the growth of religious and cultural institutions, in part, to government initiatives that promote the preservation of language and culture. In 1981, Canadian Sikhs were able to create a Sikh national organization called the Federation of Sikh Societies of Canada, and receive federal funding for the society's activities.

Despite growing assimilation, however, many Sikhs still feel the need to maintain their Punjabi heritage and protect their transnational identities. In preserving these identities, many Sikhs retain strong bonds back home, through constant travel. Movement occurs frequently between Canada and India, as is evident by the sheer number of visas issued every year. The Indian consul issues 30,000 visas annually to Canadians of Indian origin (Walton-Roberts, 2003:247).[9] The constant return of many Sikhs back to the Punjab is essential, as there is a certain awareness and reaffirmation of identity within the larger transnational picture. Strong ties also translate into a greater knowledge of ongoing events in the Punjab. These strong ties and affiliations with matters back home are a crucial feature to the Sikh diaspora community. As I will discuss in greater detail at a later point, matters back home in the Punjab often spill over into Canadian territory--both through the existing Sikh diaspora community as well as with the arrival of new Sikh immigrants. Looking at the 1984 Indian army storming of the Golden Temple and the ensuing shock waves that ran through the Canadian Sikh community, it is hard to deny that allegiances remain strong.

Summary

Historically, immigration legislations have been critical for the number, characteristics, and settlement patterns of migrants. Immigration patterns suggest that, in the past, the government of Canada did much within its power to restrict the flow of immigrants. Such measures taken by the Canadian government included total exclusion based upon racist policies, provisions such as the Continuous Voyage Act, as well as the implementation of annual immigration quotas mitigated with labor force demands. Sikh migrants found themselves in hostile surroundings, and often faced economic, political, and social barriers. The constant scorn and discrimination that many migrants experienced within their new country pushed many Sikhs to remain virtually secluded within their own religious and cultural communities. In response, the community strengthened kinship bonds among the Sikh migrants and created for them a home away from home. Thus, the harsh reality of discrimination and enmity (as revealed in episodes such as the *Komagata Maru* and the 'martyrdom' of Mewa Singh), was critical in the formation of early Sikh migrants' consciousness.

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[9] A Vancouver survey of 3,500 South Asians indicates that, of those surveyed, approximately one-third reported traveling to India in the previous year (Walton-Roberts, 2003:247).

Post-war changes in immigration policy had a profound effect on the characteristics of incoming migrants. Recent arrivals are better educated and have more professional qualifications. More importantly, however, new immigrants no longer encounter the brutal and explicit hostility that their predecessors experienced. Contemporary Canadian-Sikhs maintain a strong presence within all aspects of Canadian society, while still maintaining their religious and cultural affiliations. Still, pre-existing conditions were crucial in creating awareness amongst Sikhs as to the volatility of their faith in a new homeland. As subsequent chapters will show, challenges to and development of the early Sikh community are central in understanding processes of Canadian-Sikh fundamentalism.

Chapter 4 - History of Militancy, Martyrdom, and Fundamentalism in Sikhism

The martial spirit of Sikhism is deeply fused with the Sikh tradition of martyrdom. So explicitly linked are the two that often it is difficult to separate them. In this section, I will outline the historical origins of both the martyrdom and martial traditions back to the time of the Sikh gurus. I will argue that despite the popular belief that Sikh military tradition began under the tenth guru, Gobind Singh, it actually predated it. The period of rule under the tenth guru, however, was pivotal in transforming these already preconceived notions into action. From its onset, Sikhism was a persecuted faith, faced with harsh and brutal circumstances. Throughout its history, it has had to embody the martial spirit and the martyrdom tradition in order to ensure its survival. Today, through the use of various mediums, images and notions of martyrdom and militancy continue to permeate the collective Sikh psyche.

On Definition

Terms such as 'militant,' and 'militancy,' much like 'fundamentalist' and 'terrorist,' are heavily loaded ones and perform ineffectively in progressive academic discourse without the establishment of clear and concise definitional explanations. For the purpose of this study, I use the *Oxford English Dictionary*'s definition of 'militant.' According to this definition, a militant is one who is "aggressively active in pursuing a political or social cause . . . often favouring extreme, violent, or confrontational methods" (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2004). While I do not wish to suggest that militancy in our current discussion is a primary objective of the Sikh faith, I do suggest that it composes a significant part of collective actions. Even as I state that Sikhism is a militant faith, I do not agree with the notion that all Sikhs are militant -- simply that various teachings within the faith espouse the idea of militancy for the preservation and continuance of the faith. I also take into account that Appleby's definition does not consider directionality. The term 'militancy' does not necessarily imply instigation, and indeed while the Sikh tradition embraces some militant notions, it does not endorse aggressive action. As many Sikh teachings and indeed historical accounts themselves indicate, the employment of military action only can take place in instances of self-defense.

Martyrdom and the Rise of Religious Militancy

According to Louis Fenech (2000:39), martyrdom within the Sikh faith is a reference to "the ultimate embodiment of heroism, defiance, endurance, loyalty, fearlessness and altruism." But how did these qualities come to be? Scholars argue that these notions of martyrdom are inherent in the teachings of the founder of the religion, Guru Nanak (d.1539) (Singh, Harbans, 1964; Laskshman, 1923; Singh, Teja and Singh, Ganda, 1978; Singh, Jagjit 1981:101; Singh, Gopal, 1988). NanaKs teachings coincided with a period tainted with Brahmanical elitism, Islamic degradation, and immense political persecution. The guru's main teachings centred upon the abolishment of extraneous religious rhetoric, and an increased focus on the truth and reality of a singular God. While openly criticizing political and social conditions, Nanak encouraged his followers to adopt a willingness to sacrifice their lives, if such action resulted in the betterment of society (Fenech, 2000:73). According to Guru Nanak, individuals should perform the act of self-sacrifice out of divine love, and not obligation:

> 'Shouldst thou wish to play the game of love,
> Come unto my Path with thy head on thy palm.
> And, once you step unto his Path,
> You may well give up thy head, rather than the Cause'
> (Guru Nanak, quoted in Bhatia and Bakshi, 2000a:1).

Central to his teachings, Nanak also stressed the importance of courage and fearlessness in the face of oppression and indignation. As Gopal Singh (1979:140-141) states: "with [Guru NanaKs] rise arises also a galaxy of Saints who are also warriors dedicated to the service of others . . . full of defiance against earthly odds, and fighting not for the self . . . but for values, and against tyranny, whether spiritual or social . . . . " Nanak's message was crucial in forming the underpinnings of a philosophy later adopted and embraced by the gurus and devotees of the faith.

NanaKs successor, Guru Angad (d.1552), following the dictates of his precursor, espoused the same attitudes of fearlessness and courage. Guru Angad stressed the importance of physical development and fitness among his Sikh followers, and was responsible for the creation of a wrestling ground at Khadur. According to Chabbra (1988:127), Angad in fact, "laid the foundations of the martial spirit which the sixth and the tenth Guru infused in the Sikhs." As this statement suggests, the Sikh martial spirit did not 'spring forth' at a particular time (the time of the tenth guru, Gobind Singh as commonly suggested) -- it was, instead, infused within the faith from a much earlier period.

The fifth guru, Arjan, (1606d.) also embodied notions of fearlessness and courage in the face of tyranny. According to historical accounts, Guru Arjan instructed a Sikh soldier who had sought his advice as follows:

> 'He who proctiseth [sic] martial exercises shall become fearless in the battlefield. He who resolveth to conquer or die in arms, and who when dying claspeth the True Name to his heart, shall efface the sins of many births and obtain a place in the heroes' "heaven"' (quoted in Macauliffe, 1958b:30).

Furthermore, Arjan introduced another incentive for those willing to die for their faith: "celestial damsels" would receive martyred soldiers in the afterlife, and would serve them "'where there are gilded chambers and a palace of gold'" (quoted in Macauliffe, 1958b:30). The introduction of reward for the martyr in the afterlife added increased motivation and optimism to an otherwise ominous task.

Due to the politically turbulent environment, the Sikh community was under constant persecution, particularly by the dominant Mughal Empire. The emperor of the time, Jahangir (d.1627), ordered Guru Arjan either to accept Islam or be condemned to death. Refusing to do so, Guru Arjan underwent the grueling torture of sitting on a hot iron plate. According to tradition, the guru did not protest, all the while remaining resolute and reciting hymns. (Apparently, while undergoing the torture, Arjan recited his own *asa* (hymn or chant): "'Whatsoever your will ordains is sweetness to me. All I require is the wealth of God's name'" (quoted in Fenech, 2000:79).) The guru endured the torture to set an example for his followers, a declaration that (according to Fenech, 2000:79) "expresses confidence in the victory over tyranny and persecution." The martyrdom of Guru Arjan was a significant moment in Sikh history. Until then the religion dictated notions of martyrdom and self-sacrifice, but these notions never actually materialized into action. Guru Arjan transformed the theoretical into the physical, thereby substantiating and strengthening NanaKs message.

For Arjan's son and successor, Hargobind (d.1644), the materialization of earlier decrees was also a defining moment. His father's death brought with it the realization that words alone were not sufficient, and that if the faith were to survive then the community and its leaders had to take more strident forms of action. Hargobind added to the visual and physical elements of military might by donning two swords believed to represent temporal and spiritual power (*miri* and *piri*). (The sword of *piri* was to protect the innocent and the sword of *miri* to smite the oppressor.) Hargobind declared that, from that point on, there would be a melding of spiritual and temporal powers in the guru's house. Hargobind was also responsible both for the creation of a formalized army, and for arming the Sikh congregation, or *panth*.[10] He provided military training, and participated in several battles with the empire.

By that time, the Sikhs had successfully merged the qualities of soldier and devotee, courage and spirituality. (As Bhatia and Bakshi, [2000b:138] point out, meditation and preaching were supplemented with wrestling, riding, and hunting.) Although Hargobind was never a martyr, he was successful in fulfilling the mandate put forth by Guru Nanak by stressing the importance of defending the powerless and by adopting martial qualities.[11]

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[10] Historical records indicate that Hargobind possessed a stable of 800 horses, 300 hundred horsemen, sixty gunners and an infantry of another 500 men (Bhatia and Bakshi, 2000b:23).

The ninth guru, Hargobind's fifth and youngest son, Tegh Bahdur (d.1675), experienced a much harsher political climate than did his father. The tyrannous ruler Aurengzeb (d.1707),[12] reversed liberal religious policies, and his Empire persecuted both Hindus and Sikhs for their beliefs. Aurengzeb, who was an orthodox Muslim, attempted to purge India of all those whom he considered 'infidels' and convert it into a purely Islamic land. Eventually, his intolerance for other religions led Aurengzeb on a violent campaign of political and religious domination.

Faced with the same ultimatum as his predecessor, Arjan, Guru Tegh Bahdur also refused to accept Islam. Emperor Aurangzeb finally condemned the guru to death for his refusal to relinquish his religious beliefs. The condemnation was a fierce one. While the Guru watched, officials cut to pieces with a saw one of his loyal companions, Bhai Mati Das, while they boiled in a cauldron of hot oil another of his companions, Bhai Dayal Das. According to legend, Tegh Bahdur remained unwavering, and claimed, "'I do not frighten anyone nor do I fear anyone. For death I am prepared and I cheerfully accept it'" (quoted in Bhatia and Bakshi, 2000b:48-49). The guru suffered a public execution on November 11, 1675.

Surprisingly, there exist some interesting similarities between the martyrdoms of both gurus (Tegh Bahdur and Arjan). Both gurus lived in a period of great persecution, and Mughal emperors eventually executed both for their refusal to accept Islam. Both gurus willingly offered themselves as martyrs, manifesting the teachings of Guru Nanak. More importantly, however, just as the martyrdom of guru Arjan was critical in shaping the history of Sikhism, so too was the martyrdom of Tegh Bahdur. In fact, the creation of the Sikh *khalsa*[13] and the full-scale militarization of the *panth* (the collective Sikh people) is often credited, in part, to the execution of the ninth guru.

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[11] Fenech (2000:81) *remarks that it was not the religious tenets of Islam that the Guru fought against, but the tyranny of the Mughal Empire of the time.*

[12] Aurengzeb came to power by imprisoning his father, Shah Jahan (d.1666), and killing his two brothers. Aurengzeb, it appears, never forgave the Sikhs for having supported his brother and rival to the throne Dara Shikoh (d.1658).]

According to historical accounts, during the time of Tegh Bahdur's execution there were many Sikh onlookers present in the crowd. Rather than objecting to the events, however, many of these Sikhs (in fear for their own lives and safety) chose to blend into the crowd and go unnoticed. Disgusted by the lack of courage, the tenth and final guru, the son of Tegh Bahdur, Gobind Singh, vowed that he would develop his Sikhs such that they would be "unable and unwilling to hide in the face of similar circumstances" (Fenech, 2000:88) and "such that one of them could hold his ground against one hundred thousand others" (Macauliffe, 1958b:40). Thus is the foundational basis upon which Gobind Singh affirmed and formalized the military prowess of the Sikh *panth*.

Gobind Singh's *Khande-Ki-Pahul* (I have also seen this referred to as *Khande-Ka-Amrit*) (baptism by dagger) is an extensive account that would require discussion beyond the scope of this study. For my purpose here, I will summarize its key elements. On March 30, 1699, thousands of people gathered at Anandpur at the request of the guru. The guru addressed the congregation, speaking of their current situation (i.e., living in dangerous surroundings), and his strategy for strengthening the community. To test his followers' devotion to the faith, the guru asked a group of congregated Sikhs who among them would be willing to die for their faith. Five individuals eventually stepped forth. One by one these individuals were taken into a tent away from sight and each time the guru emerged alone with a bloodied dagger. (Some believe that the guru actually beheaded the five and then miraculously brought them back to life, while others believe that, unbeknownst to the crowd, Gobind Singh was sacrificing goats hidden in the tent, in lieu of the men.) Finally, the five volunteers emerged from the tent, donning saffron coloured clothes (which is where many believe that the colour saffron became associated with martyrdom) similar to those that the guru was wearing.

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[13] *Khalsa* refers to a group of initiated Sikhs (typically devout orthodox Sikhs) into an assembly founded in 1699 by the tenth guru, Gobind Singh.

The community came to recognize these five as the '*Panj Pyarae*' or the 'Five beloved ones.' To baptize the individuals, Gobind Singh prepared the traditionally used holy nectar with sugar and water. There was, however, one key difference. Whereas customarily the guru stirred the holy mixture with his toe (to symbolize humility), Gobind Singh used a double-edged sword to stir the nectar. The guru sprinkled the holy water or *amrit* onto the five while they recited "*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fatheh*" ("The *Khalsa* belongs to the True Lord, the Victory belongs to the True Lord"). By drinking the *amrit*, the five initiates became the first members of Gobind Singh's *khalsa* (order of the pure). Gobind Singh then received the same initiation from the five beloved ones, erasing all distinction between guru and disciple. Addressing the *khalsa*, Gobind Singh preached the virtues of military force and martyrdom, and his speech was so inspiring that often leaders still employ it to encourage and arouse the *khalsa* (Macauliffe, 1958b:43):

> 'Be loyal to your sovereign, leave death and life in the hands of God. Desert not your posts, abandon not your duty, and you shall be happy in this world and the next. If you die in battle, you shall obtain glory to which not even the monarchs can aspire. Shame not your sires and your race. He who foresaketh his master in battle shall be dishonoured here and condemned hereafter. The vultures knowing him to be disloyal, will not touch but spurn his flesh. He shall not go to heaven hereafter, nor obtain glory here. Abundant disgrace shall light upon his head. Be assured of this that human birth shall be profitable to him who loseth his life with his face to the foe. For all the drops of blood that fall from his body, so many years shall he enjoy the company of his God' (quoted in Macauliffe, 1958b:43).

The establishment of the *khalsa* was crucial for defining Sikhs as a martial group.

In addition to taking *amrit* stirred with a double-edged sword (highly symbolic within itself), Gobind Singh also gave his *khalsa* a unique and distinctive look with the *bana* -- the distinguishing Sikh uniform. The *bana* included five special symbols (commonly referred to as the Five Ks). These symbols were: *Kesh*, uncut hair, *Karra*, the iron bracelet, *Kangha*, a wooden hair comb, *Kirpan*, a sword, and *Kachherhra* or *Kaccherra*, the long underwear.[14] Gobind Singh did not implement the *bana* for the purpose of exclusion, but rather for distinction, so that (in reference to the martyrdom of Tegh Bahadur) no Sikh could hide behind the timid and cowardly acts of the past again.

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[14] Each of the five Ks bears specific significance. *Kes*, or uncut hair, symbolizes the original nature and form of man as given by God. *Kanga*, the wooden comb, is to groom the hair, and

Reacting to a Militant Past

From studying the history of the Sikh religion and the Sikh gurus, we see how elements of heroism and defiance, martyrdom and militancy came to be integral to the faith. These examples, however, do not reside in early Sikh history alone -- examples of Sikhs killed in their struggle to overcome (what they considered to be) oppressive and unjust circumstances are numerous. Many modern-day Sikh victims are those who have fought against what they believed to be a tyrannical and fraudulent Indian government (of which I will say more about later).

Far from trying to disregard what many may consider a horrific and melancholic history of martyrdom, Sikhs rely on it as a significant element of their faith. Acknowledgement of visual symbols and representations of torture, martyrdom, and battle occur through many channels. The most visual Sikh symbol of violence, the double-edged sword (*khanda*), is very often placed prominently (supported by two scabbards and enclosed in a circle) in the front of many *gurdwara* prayer halls (please see appendix 5). Sikh popular art, for instance, is heavily laden with depictions of many gurus in the midst of heroic

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thus symbolizes cleanliness. *Kara*, the iron bracelet, is to be worn on the wrist and signifies adherence to truth and freedom, free from material and aesthetic entities. *Kachherhra*, or *Kaccherra*, the long underwear, is made of cotton and symbolizes modesty. Finally, the *Kirpan*, or sword, represents the commitment made by *khalsa* members to defend their faith and protect the weak.

battle, or in the process of being martyred. Depictions of battle and martyrdom (both legendary and contemporary) are also popular in calendar art, and adorn the walls of many Sikh homes and *gurdwaras*. The Golden Temple, which is the holiest Sikh shrine, houses magnificent, brightly coloured oil paintings depicting bloody images of warfare and martyrdom.

Although Sikh scriptures (the Guru Granth Sahib) do not include stories of warfare and bloodshed, reference to militancy and martyrdom does exist in Sikh prayer. The congregation recites the Sikh prayer, (known as *ardas*) towards the end of normal rituals. The *ardas* is composed of three general sections, but it is within the second section that the hymns recall past sacrifices:

> Those male and female Singhs who gave their heads for the belief; who were ripped limb from limb, scalped, broken on the wheel and sawn apart; they sacrificed their lives for the protection of the sacred *gurdwaras*, never abandoning their faith; and who passionately guarded the secret *kes* of all pure Sikhs: O valiant Khalsa, pay attention to their merits and call on God, Waheguru! (translation courtesy of Parmar, Lal [pseud.], 2004).[15]

Disregarding the magnitude and prominence of such fierce and passionate representations within Sikh culture is difficult. Yet to assume that these images characterize the nature of Sikh people simply is erroneous. Aside from recent accounts of Sikh unrest in India, Sikhs have embraced notions of harmony and peace. (Sikhs, for example, were among the leading proponents of Gandhi's non-violent movement for independence.)

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[15] A striking example of the power that this type of transmission has is illustrated by Fenech (2000:43) who points out the one Khalistani militant (by his own account) was able to undergo an unusually brutal and long period of torture by focusing intently on this portion of *ardas*.

Negotiating the concept of what a community inherently is and what a community does is often difficult, particularly as it applies to Sikhs. The faith does not endorse violence, and in general, Sikhs are not aggressive people. The faith, however, does support defensive action and even loss of life for the protection of the faith and the security of the marginalized. The overwhelming presence of historical and contemporary cases of bravery and sacrifice strengthen the community's resolve to remain fearless in the face of adversity and to fight for what members of the faith believe to be true and pure. This caveat is sometimes susceptible to abuse, however, and such abuse is a reality that continues to plague the Sikh community.

Fundamentalism

An important interface exists between notions of fundamentalism, martyrdom, and militancy that, unfortunately, academic literature does not discuss at length.[16] Lack of in-depth scholarship on this interface in part is due to the often grey areas that these terms denote, together with the indiscriminate use of the terms. Many of the factors that drive the militant (and by extension the martyrdom) tradition (such as fear of persecution and annihilation of faith) are similar to those that fuel fundamentalism. Notions of self-sacrifice and pride are inherent in Sikh philosophy, and the degree to which the philosophy embraces militant attitudes becomes the benchmark of fundamentalist activities.

The term 'fundamentalism' has evolved over the years, gaining momentum and usage both in mass media as well as in popular consciousness (particularly in the West). Originally coined as a descriptor of conservative evangelicals within mainstream Protestant Christianity, the term 'fundamentalism' now has come to explain many religious groups, including orthodox Jewish sects in Israel, Tamil 'liberation forces' in Sri Lanka, Christian militancy movements in the West, and a host of Islamic movements operating around the world.

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[16] I am not aware of any literature to date that explicitly discusses these three (fundamentalism, martyrdom, and militancy) as coinciding forces.

Problems are manifold with utilizing a term such as 'fundamentalism' or 'fundamentalist' to describe a particular movement or the beliefs of a particular individual. Among these difficulties is the often-pejorative connotation associated with the term, especially when (as seen in the Sikh community) liberals use it within the same religious tradition. In some situations, fundamentalism also has transformed into a "term of abuse suggesting a lack of intellectual maturity on the part of those who hold more conservative views" (Bruce, 2000:12). Despite the numerous problems associated with using the term 'fundamentalism,' it nonetheless serves a useful purpose as it embodies a repeatedly occurring classification of actions and beliefs. To circumvent issues of clarification and definition, it is imperative to outline some common characteristics of fundamentalist thought and behavior, before applying it to the Sikh community.

Much of the academic literature on fundamentalism agrees on a certain set of attributes that the movement embodies. First, fundamentalism is a reaction against the increasing secularization that defines modernity (Neilsen, 1993:2). Not only does growing secularization of church and state become a problem, but also the inherent concern that a larger, more dominant force is threatening the livelihood and existence of a religion also becomes a feature. Second, fundamentalism is a reaction against the process of modernization (Neilsen, 1993:3). In this case, fundamentalism is a defensive reaction against modernity, which includes cultural change, assimilation, foreign ideas, and technologies. Third, fundamentalism views religious texts as being timeless, and therefore valid for all of time (Barr, 1977; Bruce, 2000; Caplan, 1987). Furthermore, fundamentalists see their texts as a blueprint for contemporary times, and regard truth as "unchanging, substantive, and so ultimately knowable as an object in the external world" (Mardsen, 1980:114; Nielsen, 1993). Literature also suggests that fundamentalists feel an "invalidity of the hermeneutic exegesis of scripture" (Barr, 1977:5). As such, fundamentalists view any type of scriptural interpretation or explanation that deviates from a literal reading of the text as being unsound and fallacious. Fourth, fundamentalism strives to return society to a "Golden Era," a time similar to a "Golden Age" in the past. For fundamentalists, the "Golden Age" refers to a time when the members of the movement or those with which they identify were "strong, vital, and in control of the world" (Beeman, 2001:2). Said another way, fundamentalists maintain the existence of a perfect social embodiment of genuine religion in the past (Bruce, 2000:14). Fifth, adherents to fundamentalist movements are reactive individuals, often marginalized and excluded from power (Bruce, 2000:14; Caplan, 1990:3). Finally, fundamentalist movements are characterized by the presence of a "charismatic leader" who subscribes to the reputed fundamentals of the faith and calls for reform and a return to the fundamentals of religion (Bruce, 2000:12; Nielsen, 1993:8).

Borrowing from these previous theories of fundamentalism, I argue that fundamentalism does not occur within a vacuum. It transpires whenever a group is threatened with what it envisages to be persecution and/or imminent extinction at the hands of a dominant force, or what it considers a weakening of the faith through either the modernization or the liberalization of the surrounding environment. Furthermore, I argue that, in any of these circumstances, the presence of a charismatic leader helps motivate the group towards a common goal, sometimes justifying some form of militant defense. This amalgamation of various theories provides an effective framework within which we can locate a discussion of Sikh fundamentalism, especially as it has unfolded in Canada.

The History of Sikh Fundamentalism

There exist numerous discussions on the early origins of Sikh fundamentalism in the academic literature (Dietrich, 1993; Madan, 1991; Oberoi, 1993). As such, I will not go too in-depth on the political and social background of Sikh fundamentalism, but rather offer a brief overview, sufficient enough to ensue a discussion of its contemporary manifestations.

Despite suffering severe losses during the time of the Indian partition, the Sikhs were able quickly to repair damages (both socially and economically) and become one of the most prosperous communities in India. The Punjab became India's most progressive and wealthy state, wielding the country's highest per capita income, as well as becoming the nation's most productive agricultural state. In the midst of the Punjab's success arose a group of Sikhs who saw the modernism that came with growth and prosperity as a threat to the faith as well as to their collective identity. As Tully and Jacob (1985:37) observe, "Terry-cotton shirts, jeans, motor cycles [sic] and whisky do not go with the observances of the five [K]'s. Modern life is too fast for cumbersome processes like tying turbans, and washing waist-length hair. So to many Sikhs the safety razor became the symbol of modernity, and this alarmed the orthodox." Combined with the threat of modernity, there exists also the threat of Hindus and the predominantly Hindu-government.

Sikhs continue to compose only a tiny minority in an overwhelmingly 80% Hindu-dominated nation. As such, there always exists the threat of assimilation into the larger Hindu community. Despite the factions caused by caste and class distinctions, Hindus remain a cohesive and powerful force with the ability to absorb surrounding groups. As Tully and Jacob (1985:37) point out, religions such as Jainism and Buddhism whose roots lie in India, now have practically vanished. (The Hindus successfully absorbed the Buddha within the boundaries of their own faith, transforming him into an incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu.) Given such social forces, Sikhism had to struggle not only for sheer survival, but also for the preservation of an identity *separate* from Hinduism.[17]

In addressing growing concerns of assimilation and absorption, many Sikhs felt the need to create a political party that would voice the opinions and concerns of the Sikh population. The *Akali Dal* transpired as an offshoot of the larger *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee* (or commonly known as the SGPC).[18] While the party was successful in providing a Sikh voice within the Hindu-dominated political arena, it nonetheless decided to merge with the Indian national party, the Congress. The move proved to be premature as the Congress was embroiled in taking care of its own constituencies and did little to address the demands and plight of the Sikh community. The lack of compliance and support by the Congress left many Sikhs unsettled. As an unheard minority, it led many to question the famous epigram "'The Hindus got Hindustan [out of independence], the Muslims got Pakistan [out of partition], what did the Sikhs get [out of independence or the partition]?'" (quoted in Nayar, 1996:102).

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[17] Many Sikhs were infuriated with the Indian government's refusal to acknowledge Sikhism as a separate religious entity. One particular section of the Indian constitution has long aggravated many Sikhs fighting for group identity. Article 25 (b) of the Indian constitution catalogues Sikhism *with* Hinduism: "The reference to Hindus should be construed as including a reference to person's [sic] professing the Sikh, Jaina, or Buddhist religion. . . ." (Williams, 1988:77). This article clearly eradicates any sort of individualized Sikh identity.

The ensuing political struggles between the *Akali Dal* and Congress helped fuel Sikh fundamentalism in the Punjab. For one, Congress guidelines only permitted the *Akali Dal* limited rule in the Punjab -- on average only a year and four months at a time (Brass, 1990:169-213). The party was never able to establish itself fully with such limited ruling capabilities. Furthermore, many Sikhs felt the *Akali Dal* was more concerned with the creation of party alliances (many suspected the *Akali Dal* of collaborating with the Hindu *Jana Sangh* party), and no longer represented Sikh interests within the region. In 1978, disillusioned with the *Akali Dal*s failure at obtaining any type of authority within the region, a group of exasperated Sikh youths founded the *Dal Khalsa*.

Members of the *Dal Khalsa* felt that the so-called national 'secular' government in India was simply an "extension of 'Hindu imperialism'" and a regime that involved "the enslavement of Sikhs" (Oberoi, 1993: 261). Members of the *Dal Khalsa* called attention to an array of government abuses:

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[18] According to Oberoi (1993:259), an assembly of Sikhs created the SGPC for the purpose of shrine administration, but the SGPC later became an arena for political and social battles. A group of Sikhs also created the *Akali Dal* for the purpose of coordinating Sikh volunteers.

> Sikhs were not allowed to freely practice their religion, the sanctity of their holy places had often been violated. Akali governments in the Punjab were never allowed to last for the period of their constitutional term, and Sikhs were being economically discriminated against by the federal government, particularly in areas of employment and budget allocations (Oberoi, 1993:261).

These grievances were enough to instigate the creation of several other Sikh parties, including the *Damdami Taksal.* Despite these efforts, however, the parties were never actually successful in attaining real power. The groups either performed dismally in elections, or as in the case of the *Akali Dal*, were dismissed by the newly elected government of India under Indira Gandhi. With the demise of the *Akali Dal*, many of its members abandoned the party and joined the *Damdami Taksal*, under the leadership of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

The Legacy of Bhindranwale

As our working definition suggests, fundamentalist attitudes arise when a group perceives the threat of persecution or possible extinction by a larger more dominant force, or when it senses a weakening of the faith, through either the modernization or liberalization of the surrounding environment. As outlined above, threats of absorption by the Hindu society, domination under the 'secularized' but predominantly Hindu government, and a weakening of the faith due to growing modernization and liberalization were realities for the Sikh community. Thus, the time was ripe for the arrival of a charismatically charged leader who claimed that he would defend and liberate the Sikhs. This leader came in the form of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (d.1984).

Not only was Bhindranwale a great propagator of religious fundamentalism, he was also, according to Juergensmeyer, "the most visible and charismatic of this generation's militant leaders" (1988:68). An analysis of Bhindranwale's life and mission (particularly as revealed through his numerous sermons and speeches) serves a two-fold purpose. It not only reveals the nexus that exists between militancy and fundamentalism but it also reveals the relevance of Bhindranwale's charismatic leadership to the Sikh fundamentalist movement.

At an early age, Bhindranwale received training as a religious preacher and soon became the head of the premier religious school the *Damdami Taksal*. Visually, he represented the staunchest of Sikhs, always wearing the traditional blue or saffron colours, and boldly displaying his dagger.[19] He launched an ideological crusade against what he believed to be the religious and cultural corruption of Sikhs. He demanded a strict adherence to the Sikh symbols, and harshly criticized those Sikhs who had disposed of them: "'You people cut your beards, do you think you resemble the image of Gurū Gobind Singh? And if you don't and He was your Father then what does that make you? I hesitate to say what you should be called [bastards]'" (quoted in Pettigrew, 1987:15). For

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[19] Tully and Jacob (1985:54) note that every time they saw Bhindranwale he also carried with him a more modern weapon as well, such as a revolver. Madan (1991:596) notes that a former Sikh general of the Indian army (dismissed on charges of corruption) was responsible for teaching Bhindranwale and his followers the use of modern weaponry.

Bhindranwale, the threat of Hindu-domination was only matched with the threat of secularization and modernization that had tempted many Sikhs to deviate from the fundamentals of their faith. Bhindranwale boldly stated his contempt for secularized Sikhs, and those Sikhs who had deviated from their faith in the name of modernization:

> 'I cannot really understand how it is that, in the presence of Sikhs, Hindus are able to insult the [scriptures]. I don't know how these Sikhs were born to mothers and why they were not born to animals: to cats and to bitches. . . . [W]hoever insults the Guru Granth Sahib should be killed then and there. . . . Some youth complain that they do such deeds then nobody harbours them, Well, no place is holier that this one [the Golden Temple]. . . . I will take care of the man who comes to me after lynching the murderer of the Guru Granth Sahib; I'll fight for his case. What else do you want? That things have come to such a pass is in any event all your own weakness. . . . The man whose sister is molested and does nothing about it, whose Guru is insulted and who keeps on talking and doing nothing, has he got any right to be known as the son of the Guru? Just think for yourselves!' (quoted in Pettigrew,1987:23).

Despite his somewhat harsh criticisms, however, Bhindranwale's popularity continued to grow. His charisma and loyalty to the precepts of the *khalsa* conferred him with a large group of disciples. As their leader, he saw himself as the embodiment of perfected devotion:

> 'One who takes the vows of faith and helps others take it; who reads the

> scriptures and helps others do the same; who avoids liquor and drugs and helps others do likewise. . . , who says: 'respect your scriptures, unite under the flag, stoutly support the community, and be attached to your Lord's throne and home' (quoted in Juergensmeyer, 1988:70).

His earthy, compelling sermons were hard to ignore, and in light of growing unrest within the region, his message became a beacon for believers.

Perhaps part of his growing popularity had to do with his ability to link present-day Sikh perils with those of the past. As earlier mentioned, the Sikh history of martyrdom and persecution formed an essential part of Sikh identity and consciousness. Playing on this theme, Bhindranwale insisted that just as the early Sikh community (while consistently on the brink of assimilation) lived under the tyrannical rule of the Mughal empire and relied on the gurus for protection and guidance, modern Sikhs too were victims of the corrupt so-called 'secular' government of India, and they too needed spiritual guidance and direction. "'The rulers [the Congress Party leaders] should keep in mind that in the past many like them did try in vain to annihilate the Gurus'" (quoted in Pettigrew,1987:23). Although Bhindranwale never claimed to be a guru, his actions nonetheless paralleled one, as he staunchly vowed to protect the faith from those forces that he deemed detrimental. In re-creating scenes from the past, however, one essential change came about: as previous discussions about the history of Sikh martyrdom reveal, Sikhs were more often prone to suffer for their cause than to instigate violence for it.

According to Bhindranwale, keeping weapons was a necessary component of faith:

> 'I am strongly opposed to having weapons and then engaging in looting shops, looting someone's home, dishonoring anyone's sister or daughter. . . . With reference to weapons I shall only say that you should bear arms. Being armed, there is no greater sin for a Sikh than attacking an unarmed person, killing an innocent person, looting a shop, harming the innocent, or wishing to insult anyone's daughter or sister' (quoted in Ajrawat, 1997).

Nonetheless, Bhindranwale was also quick to add that, "'being armed, there is no sin greater than not seeking justice'" (quoted in Ajrawat, 1997). To Bhindranwale, justice would prevail only after the elimination of all forces detrimental to the inner piety of the Sikh faith. Thus, the use of militant violence upon those forces became not only acceptable, but indeed necessary.

Bhindranwale was a religious fundamentalist in all senses. He maintained a literal reading of texts, viewed secularization and modernization as detrimental forces, adhered to a strict code of conduct, and condemned all those who did not follow suit. In pursuing his fundamentalist views, however, Bhindranwale resorted to militant means -- means that he believed were fully justified by his faith. Borrowing from the early martyrdom and militant rhetoric of Nanak and Gobind Singh respectively, Bhindranwale justified his use of militancy in protecting his faith from the 'Hindu' enemy. For example, in a speech given in May 1983, he stated:

> "'Now we [the Sikhs] are struggling on behalf of all Punjabis. We are not making demands. We are asking for our rights. And we have to get our

> rights. It is not that we are not to get them and all this is idle talk. We have to get them even if it means we are cut up bit by bit. We have to get them under all circumstances'" (quoted in Fenech, 2000:292).

Bhindranwale was successful in convincing his Sikh followers to adopt arms in the battle against the government of Indira Gandhi. According to Fenech (2000:292), he stressed the importance of preserving Sikh honour, "casting off the shackles of 'Sikh slavery' (in the words of Bhindranwale) through violence and martyrdom."

All the while, however, Bhindranwale fused his violent actions and mandates with fundamental principles of faith. His language was heavily loaded with religious rhetoric, thus validating his fierce missions. For example, in addressing a group of followers, Bhindranwale declared:

> 'Young men: with folded hands, I beseech you . . . . Until we enter our home, until we have *swords* on us, *shorts* on our bodies, *Guru's word on our tongues*, and the *double-edged sword* in our hands, we shall get beatings. It is now up to you to decide . . . . [T]he decision is in your hands' (quoted in Juergensmeyer, 1988:70 [emphasis added]).

His utilization of religious terms such as swords, shorts, Guru, and double-edged sword, added appeal to his comments and provided a rationale for them, and effectively fused religious fundamentalism with militancy.

Opponents often referred to Bhindranwale as the "deranged Indian Rasputin" (Mulgrew, 1988:65), and his open and defiant use of violence eventually brought him into direct confrontation with the State, and soon widespread terror tore through the Punjab. Young groups of religious extremists (particularly those affiliated with the All India Sikh Students Federation) carried out widespread and random killings. According to one personal account, "in the streets, they [religious extremists] would just ride their motorbikes around yelling '*Khalistan Zindabad, Khalistan Zindabad'* [Long live Khalistan, Long live Khalistan]. . . . I took my son to the Golden Temple and there were men, young, young men, walking around with guns in their hands, *in the temple!* [stressed]. . . . We didn't see Bhindranwale, he would preach, but he was surrounded by people and bodyguards. . . It was hard to see him (Bander, Harjit [pseud.], 2004).[20] According to Mulgrew, (1988:64) while the dynamics of the situation drove *khalsa* Sikhs closer together, it also worked to further estrange them from the Gandhi government.[21]

Shortly following the infamous *Nirinkari* confrontation,[22] in an unprecedented move, Bhindranwale and his followers moved their headquarters onto the grounds of the Golden Temple, in Amritsar. From within the confines of the temple, Bhindranwale continued to call for armed rebellion against the Indian government. Religious insurgency against Hindus and unorthodox Sikhs resulted in Sikh fundamentalists' hijacking of several Indian planes, bombing Indian sites, and carrying out assassinations (Nandi, 1996:185). At the same time, the government under the direction of Indira Gandhi began to infiltrate the ranks of Bhindranwale, and in the process orchestrated acts of terrorism and violence as well. Disintegration of public order, pressure to stop Sikh fundamentalist violence, and exceeding tension from both sides eventually resulted in one of the worst attacks in the history of religious India. In June 1984, Indira Gandhi ordered a full-scale military attack (named Operation Blue Star) on the Golden Temple complex.[23] The attack lasted three days, and cost the lives of thousands of innocent Sikh devotees, together with Bhindranwale and his lieutenants (Juergensmeyer, 2000:78).

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[20] Although Bhindranwale never clearly demanded the establishment of a new independent Sikh homeland (referred to as *Khalistan*), it nonetheless came to be associated with his movement.

[21] Commenting on the mind-set of Sikh extremists, one senior civil servant explained, "The extremist strategy is clear for anyone to see. The best short-cut to Khalistan is through causing massive Hindu-Sikh riots all over the country" (Gupta and Chawla, 1984:28).

[22] Aside from lapsed Sikhs and the Indian government, Bhindranwale considered his largest enemy the Sikh minority sect, the *Nirankaris*. Bhindranwale felt that the *Nirankari* sect, whose belief in a living guru, canonical additions to the Guru Granth Sahib, and lapsed dress code, was an heretical sect, and a detriment to inner Sikh piety. In a well-known event that occurred on April 13, 1978, Bhindranwale and his followers attempted to halt a convention that the *Nirankaris* were holding in the Sikh holy city of Amritsar, on grounds of apostasy. In their attempt at stopping the controversial group, Bhindranwale and his followers marched into the Golden Temple and a vicious, armed confrontation ensued, resulting in numerous deaths. This event single-handedly launched Bhindranwale into the political spotlight and made him a famed fundamentalist.

I will not go into detail here about the numerous riots that plagued the Punjab following Operation Blue Star, but it will be sufficient to say that the desecration of Sikhism's holiest site, the assassination of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, together with the violence that arose against Sikhs following the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards, gave new impetus to, and changed the dynamics of, the fundamentalist movement. For the majority of Sikh fundamentalists there was only one answer -- partition. *Khalistan* (land of the pure) suddenly began to transform from a far-fetched theoretical aspiration into a working project. As we will see in the following chapter, the creation of the nation-state *Khalistan* continues to define the character of contemporary Sikh fundamentalists.

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[23] In addition to the Golden Temple, the Indian Army attacked, at the same time, several other Sikh shrines, although these attacks receive little attention in historical records.

Conclusion

Numerous academic accounts discuss the social and economic pretexts of early Sikh fundamentalism and militancy (Dietrich, 1993; Madan, 1991; Nandi, 1996; Oberoi, 1993). Motives for early Sikh anxieties mostly centre around economic inequality, and the lack of proper and distinct political recognition. These factors, however, are a limited view of a much broader scope of grievances. The emergence of modernization inevitably altered the face of Sikhism, and the establishment of a liberalized secular government underscored the Sikh notion of *miri/piri* (the melding of temporal and spiritual powers) as instigated by Guru Hargobind Singh.

Many academics, Juergensmeyer, and Madan amongst others, compare Sikh fundamentalism to the legendary double-edged sword icon. The bilateral nature of the sword represents the two enemies of the Sikh faith that ultimately give rise to religious fundamentalism: the Hindu-dominated 'secular' government, and the non-orthodox Sikh members. Under the charismatic leadership of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a strict re-iteration of Sikh values and precepts created a chasm between Hindus and Sikhs, and the orthodox from the nonconformist. The ensuing violence that came from the Indian government in response to Bhindranwale's tactics led to the desecration of the Golden Temple, and ultimately a new *modus operandi* for Sikh fundamentalists.

Chapter 5 - Sikh Militant Groups in Canada

A peaceful religion at its core, the Sikh faith nonetheless has born various militant groups whose illegal, and violent, actions sometimes have deadly consequences. Militancy[24] is not a new phenomenon within Sikhism--the creations of early militant movements were in response to increasing pressures and oppression generated by contemporary Mughal leaders. The martyrdom of the fifth guru, Arjan, on May 30, 1606 changed the face of Sikh spirituality, commencing a belief in the right to defend Sikhism with the use of arms. Legend states that Arjan's son and successor, Guru Hargobind, donned two swords, one representing secular power, the other representing spirituality (*miri/piri*). Hargobind often discussed military strategy in public gatherings at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, and in an effort to avenge the death of Guru Arjan, Hargobind recruited and trained a body of soldiers.

The martyrdom of the ninth guru, Tegh Bahadur, further justified the use of militancy in order to protect and sustain the faith--a notion that solidified the creation of the Sikh *khalsa* [the religio-political order of baptized Sikhs] under the leadership of the tenth and final guru, Gobind Singh. In response to the growing persecution of Sikhs, Gobind Singh advised his community to take up arms and protect the faith, stating "when all other means have failed, it is permissible to draw the sword" (Singh, Narindar 1994). In 1699, Gobind Singh introduced the order of the *khalsa*, and with the initiation of every member, the face of Sikhism began to change from a passive, non-violent movement to a *sant* [religious or holy] -- soldier order complete with distinguishing symbols and sacraments.

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[24] I utilize the term 'terrorism' in accordance with Bruce Hoffman who defines it as "the deliberate creation and exploitation of fear through violence or the threat of violence in the pursuit of political change" (Hoffman,1998:43). I use the term 'militant' more frequently than 'terrorist' due to greater ambiguity associated with the latter. While all the groups that I describe within this study are in some capacity associated with militancy, I am hesitant to label them all as synonymously terrorist. Still, some actions (such as the 1985 bombing of an Air-India flight) are clearly acts of terrorism, and I have employed the term in such instances.

Sikh militancy has not disappeared or diminished through the years, but due to a large diaspora community its character has changed. While grievances still exist in India between Sikhs and a predominantly Hindu government, the planning, fundraising, and execution of military activities have shifted abroad. With a Sikh population of roughly 278,410, Canada has several Sikh militant and sometimes terrorist movements operating within its borders, as the lengthy Air-India bombing trial has revealed (Statistics Canada, Catalogue #97F0022XCB01004).

The 1985 bombing of Air-India flight 182 off the coast of Ireland affirmed the presence of Canadian Sikh terrorism. With the arrest and trial of several key figures, Sikh violence is now in the foreground of public scrutiny. Behind the Air-India massacre, however, exists a message and a struggle that links diaspora Sikhs back to their homeland.

Although a minority within the Sikh community at large, Sikh militants remain a vital force, with operations spanning around the world (including Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States). Due to the nature of their activities, Sikh separatist groups remain the focus of many national and international policing units and securities establishments. In Canada, Sikh separatists are now "one of the two major areas in which the manpower of CSIS [Canadian Security and Intelligence Service] is deployed" (Jiwa, 1986). The major concern for establishments such as CSIS remains the use of foreign (in this case Canadian) soil as a launching pad for Sikh militant and terrorist activities.

Such radical activities have raised concern among Canadian authorities. As a 1999 Special Senate Committee Report states, Canada remains "a 'venue of opportunity' for terrorist groups: a place where they may raise funds, purchase arms and conduct other activities to support their organizations and their terrorist activities elsewhere. Most of the major international terrorist organizations have a presence in Canada" (Department of the Solicitor General of Canada, 1999). By the same token, Sikh militancy has a tremendous international presence. With major cells operating in Canada, diaspora Sikhs are an essential component of the militant movement.

In this chapter, I provide an overview of three of these militant Sikh groups-- the World Sikh Organization, the International Sikh Youth Federation, and the Babbar Khalsa. In doing so I pay particular attention to internal conflicts within and among these groups. I suggest that these internal conflicts and frictions complicate the operation of Canadian Sikh militancy, as groups compete for scarce community resources and money.

History of Sikh Militancy in Canada

Notwithstanding the boundaries of physical distance, the Sikh diaspora has long played an integral role in the political and social matters of the Punjab. Political matters of the Punjab in particular have generated a web of interest and intrigue among Sikh diaspora communities. In response to this avid interest in 'homeland politics,' the diaspora population is responsible for the attainment and mobilization of funds in assisting with political endeavours in the Punjab.

Evidence of early political linkages between the diaspora community and the Punjab are numerous. Motivated by The Khalsa Diwan Society in Amritsar, Sikh diaspora communities established their own Khalsa Diwan Societies in both British Columbia (B.C.) and California. Diwan [Sikh religious assembly] societies in turn became funnels of information straight from Amritsar. Numerous media sources (such as the *Khalsa Advocate*, the *Khalsa Samachar*, and *Pardesi Khalsa*) also sprang to life in diasporic communities, providing up-to-the-minute news and reporting about the current political climate from the homeland.

Historically, however, one movement stands out as the pinnacle of early Sikh protest movements in response to political events back home. The movement is important because it not only reveals early links of diasporic action/reaction to homeland events, but also it exhibits the underpinnings of early diasporic militant movements. A group of North American East-Indians (the majority being Sikhs) who were calling for an end to the British occupation of India along with self-rule created The Ghadar, (or Gadar as it is sometimes spelled) movement in the early parts of the twentieth century. The same name (Ghadar) also corresponded to a newspaper published by members of the Hindustani Association of the Pacific Coast in the United States in 1912, but later also came to represent the movement of rebellion that the paper propagated. Members of the movement disseminated the paper to Indian diaspora communities around the world in various languages including Punjabi, Hindi, Gujrati, Pushto, Urdu, Nepali, and Bangali.

As the movement began to gain momentum, senior members resolved to liberate India vis-á-vis the invasion of Kashmir, through to the Punjab, and finally to the remaining Indian provinces. Clearly, the operation would employ violent means--members of the Ghadar movement prepared for the attack with extensive training in weapons handling, bomb manufacturing, and aircraft flying (Singh, Harbans, 1995:63). Although the Ghadar movement was not successful in single-handedly freeing India from its dominators, it did claim responsibility for an onslaught of numerous terrorist activities throughout the Punjab. (Estimates indicate that roughly 8000 *Ghadarites* [members of the Ghadar movement] had returned to India by 1916 to aid in terrorist activities [Singh, Jaspal, 2004].)

While I have not elaborated a great deal on the Ghadar movement here[25] this short overview is sufficient for illustrating the connection that exists between the Sikh diasporic community and homeland politics. In this case, the diasporic community was successful in the organization and mobilization of a movement aimed at challenging the political climate of the time.

In speaking to the important dynamic that exists between the diasporic community and the homeland (as revealed through the Ghadar movement), Mark Juergensmeyer points to the *Ghadar syndrome*. According to Juergensmeyer, the Ghadar syndrome is:

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[25] For a more detailed account on the Ghadar movement please refer to Mark Juergensmeyer's (1979) "The Ghadar Syndrome: Ethnic Anger and Nationalist Pride."

> A militant nationalist movement [that] is created abroad by expatriates, for whom the movement is also an outlet for their economic and social frustrations, and a vehicle for their ethnic identities. It is the fusion and the mutual interaction of ethnic anger and nationalist pride (Juergensmeyer, 1979:54).

The groups that I discuss in this study differ from the early revolutionaries of the Ghadar party in that their goals are (at least in theory) primarily religious. At the same time, however, Canadian-based Sikh militant movements echo sentiments of the Ghadar movement. As we will see, they too are militant movements created abroad by expatriates frustrated by social conditions of the homeland. In their efforts to establish an independent homeland, these groups as well attempt to reassert their combined ethnic and religious identities. In both the early Ghadar movement and in later Canadian-Sikh militant movements, the diasporic community operates as a powerful and inspirational tool in achieving homeland political aims.

World Sikh Organization (WSO)

I include the World Sikh Organization (WSO, hereafter) in this study, despite its outward non-violence stance, due to past implications of certain members of the WSO in militant activities (Tatla, 1999:116). The WSO's inclusion is essential because of the group's influence in Sikh affairs. In many instances where Sikhs are charged with various criminal offences, the WSO is quick to offer financial aid for the defence costs of the accused (Jiwa, 1986). Because of the size and influence that the WSO wields, it remains a powerful entity in Sikh politics, worthy of further inquiry. Sikhs established the organization on July 28, 1984 at a meeting held in Madison Square Gardens, New York. The meeting included Sikh delegates from Canada, the United States, Great Britain, and the Far East. Heading the movement was a prominent California multi-millionaire named Didar Singh Bains as well as Jaswant Singh Bhullar, who was a retired major-general from the Punjab.

The meeting in Madison Square Gardens solidified several important aspects of the WSO movement. Delegates decided that, in addition to an international council, the WSO would branch into two main entities: WSO-Canada, and WSO-America. In addition, the newly formed WSO also agreed upon a charter and constitution. The organization's objectives are as follows:

1) To promote and follow the teachings of the Ten Gurus and Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

2) To strive, through peaceful means, for the establishment of a Sikh nation, KHALISTAN, in order to protect the Sikh identity and faith as ordained by the Guru Panth in the daily prayer RAJ KAREGA KHALSA (The *Khalsa* Shall Rule).

3) To promote and facilitate an active line of communication amongst the Sikhs of the world.

4) To work for the promotion of the ideals of universal brotherhood, peace, justice, freedom of worship and speech, respect for cultural diversity and human dignity for all, without any distinction as per the instruments and covenants of the United Nations Organization.

5) To promote and protect Sikh interests all over the world by participating in the formulation and implementation of the policies of the Sikh Nation (World Sikh Organization, 2004).

From the beginning, participants and delegates agreed that the organization would meet its mandates through peaceful lobbying rather than violence (Jiwa, 1986).

In pursuing its mandates, the WSO opened two offices, one in New York and the other in Ottawa, and in 1985 began publishing a newspaper called *World Sikh News*. According to co-editor of the *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, Darshan Singh Tatla, the publication aims to "'project the voice of Sikhs across the world,' giving news of the 'independence struggle' and highlighting Sikh participation in America's social and cultural life" (Tatla, 1999:118). The newspaper also serves to publicize the WSO organization and potentially attract new members.

Along with putting out a news publication, the WSO has been successful in promoting its mandate of an independent Sikh homeland through the organization of various rallies, and through its continued presence at various political events. Perhaps due to its more peaceful approach, the WSO has enjoyed a large following. According to Tatla (1999:116), 1987 estimates of WSO memberships throughout North America sat roughly at 16,000, many of whom were professionals and contributed heavily towards the goal of Sikh autonomy.

Despite a mandate that clearly identifies the WSO as a group lobbying and working toward an independent Sikh nation, the WSO has not limited its presence to this end alone. In Canada, the WSO received considerable attention from its intervener status in the RCMP turban case, in which it was able to defend the rights of turbaned police officers (Kaur, 2001).[26] In addition, the WSO also has played an important role in matters related to the wearing of the *kirpan* by school-children, as well as matters related to the operations of Sikh temples. Because of its strong presence in the affairs of Sikh justice and its proclamation of non-violence, the WSO has become an important player in Sikh politics. In particular, the WSO has come to represent many Sikhs around the world who condemn Sikh militant activity, but who may not necessarily oppose the creation of an independent homeland. Nevertheless, the WSO remains a powerful entity, perhaps not as a militant group, but rather in its indirect support of accused militants. Comments made by the WSO regarding the 1985 Air-India bombing illustrate this indirect support.

WSO representatives maintain that Canadian authorities have botched investigations surrounding the Air-India incident. Despite a guilty plea and confession by one of the accused, the WSO continues to maintain that the "actual perpetrators have not been brought to justice" (Bolan, 2003c). WSO president, Ram Raghbir Singh Chahal, reiterated this belief, stating that "it is our continued hope that the actual perpetrators of this crime will be brought to justice. . . . We expect that this case may not be resolved, or jurisprudence served, if there is a failure to produce credible evidence for the conviction" (Bolan, 2003c).

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[26] In the early 1980s Baljit Dhillon was prohibited from wearing a turban due to a mandate within the RCMP that officers were prohibited from wearing any religious symbols as part of their uniform. In 1990, however, the federal government of Canada removed the ban, thus permitting Sikhs to wear the turban as a part of the traditional RCMP attire.

Furthermore, the WSO released a statement calling for a public inquiry into the case, with Canadian WSO president stating, "most Sikhs believe that all aspects of the crime, the foreign and domestic police work, and the prima facie evidence, should be thoroughly examined by an independent body" (Bolan, 2003c). Although not definitively militant in action, the WSO, through its continued defence of accused (and self-admitted)[27] terrorists, remains a powerful and influential entity in Sikh militancy.

The International Sikh Youth Federation

Experts believe that the International Sikh Youth Federation (ISYF) existed long before India had gained independence (Mahmood, 1996). Re-introduced again in August 1984, the ISYF became a powerful entity in Sikh politics. Spear-headed in the United Kingdom following the 1984 events of Operation Blue Star by Harpal Singh, and enforced by Amrik Singh and Jasbir Bhindranwale (the nephew of the later Sikh 'martyr' Sant Jarnail Bhindranwale), the movement took off with renewed fervour.

The early years of the movement, however, suffered from inner turmoil. Due to varying opinions, the ISYF split into two followings one adhering to Jasbir Singh Rode and his brother Lakhbir Singh Rode, and the other to Satinderpal Singh Gill. From that point, the movement was never able to collect itself under the following of a single leader, as the initial factions gave way to the creation of many more splinter groups. These groups continue to operate independently of one another, albeit subscribing to similar philosophies and objectives. The ISYF held its first conference in September 1985 in Walsall, U.K., and has since operated around the world, with its largest followings being in the U.K., Germany, Canada, and the U.S.

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[27] Inderjit Singh Reyat, for example, admitted to assisting in the building of explosive devices during his testimony at the Air-India trial. Having just completed a 10-year manslaughter sentence for his role in the 1985 explosion at Tokyo's Narita airport, Reyat is now serving a 5-year manslaughter sentence for his role in the Air-India bombing.

As with the WSO, the aims and objectives of the ISYF are not solely related to the creation of an independent state of Khalistan. The 1985 constitution clearly states the goals of the ISYF:

1) To promote Sikh philosophy and the Sikh way of life.
2) To promote and preserve the Sikh heritage and culture.
3) To speak out against Human Rights violations.
4) To act as a voice of the oppressed Sikhs of India.
5) To peacefully work towards establishing an independent homeland for the Sikhs - Khalistan (SikhLionz, 2003).

The movement's early days stressed non-violence and peaceful protest, despite its implication in armed militancy (Mahmood, 1996). Today, in spite of meagre attempts at non-violence, the ISYF remains a terrorist movement, and perhaps the most militant of all Sikh organizations ('Assented to' Acts Service, 1999).

According to a statement put out by the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada:

> The ISYF is a Sikh organization whose aim is to promote Sikh philosophy and the establishment of an independent Sikh nation called Khalistan. In the pursuit of their goal, the ISYF does not hesitate to resort to violence. Since 1984, its members have been engaged in terrorist attacks,

> assassinations and bombings mostly against Indian political figures, but also against moderate members of the Sikh community opposed to their [sic] extremist ways ('Assented to' Acts Service, 1999).

Sources support the statement made by the Canadian government, linking the ISYF with numerous exploits, including murders, bomb blasts, and abductions (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004).

Despite its openly militant stance, the ISYF still maintains a high degree of political influence. In North America especially, the ISYF involves itself in various political forums, and the group regularly invites and hosts a variety of government personnel to various events. On many occasions, politicians have spoken at different ISYF functions (Mahmood, 1996). To promote the group and make the organization accessible to interested parties, the ISYF also distributes the popular newspaper publication, *Chardhi Kalq*, and operates an ISYF website.

A report by the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada states, "The ISYF collaborates and/or associates with a number of Sikh terrorist organizations, notably Babbar Khalsa (BK), the Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF) and the Khalistan Commando Force (KCF)" ('Assented to' Acts Service, 1999). Despite the statement, however, the ISYF does not always collaborate with other Sikh groups. Often, the struggle for limited resources results in infighting among various groups and factions. This infighting is most pertinent when considering issues of fundraising. In the case of the ISYF, the majority of fundraising occurs through *gurdwaras*.

Monetary donations are a common practice in Sikh *gurdwaras*. Donations made by members or attendees of the *gurdwaras* cover routine expenditures, including building maintenance, clerical costs, food costs, etc. Because of the large sums of money that circulate within the *gurdwaras* every year, control of the temples is essential in the procurement of funds.

As only one of several powerful Sikh groups, the ISYF must compete for control of these temples. Gaining control is not always an easy task, as Tatla points out, because many of the *gurdwaras* were already in the hands of pro-Khalistani separatist groups (Tatla, 1996). Reportedly some of the largest and most profitable *gurdwaras* in North America were at one time under the control of ISYF personnel. *Gurdwaras* best known for past links to ISYF include ones in Abbotsford (B.C.), New Westminster (B.C.), Surrey (B.C.), and the most lucrative Ross Street *gurdwara* in Vancouver (B.C.) (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004).

Besides procurement of funds through control of *gurdwaras*, the ISYF also relies heavily on funds provided by the Sikh diaspora community. Reports indicate that in a 1984 effort to raise funds in North America, the ISYF introduced a membership drive, charging individuals a five dollar fee. Allegedly, persons not enrolling were branded as "agents of government agencies" (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004). Thus, in order to avert suspicion, many Sikhs purchased memberships.

The ISYF is also responsible for the creation of the Khalsa Human Rights Group (KHR). According to the group itself, KHR operates as an independent human rights coalition, pleading for human rights in India by means of letter writing, public meetings, and publications. The group's website states that KHR "will be independent and non-partisan" and "will be funded by voluntary contributions." Furthermore, the website states that "donations are accepted on the understanding that they do not influence the objectives of the organization" (Jones, 2003).

Despite claims of non-partisan operations and donations for the purpose of investigating human rights abuses, authorities have made allegations linking the organization to illicit activities. Sources state that the KHR, at one time, was responsible for fundraising large amounts for pro-Khalistani militants and terrorists residing in various countries (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004). Although no other information seems to appear to support this claim, it remains that the KHR, by producing propaganda on alleged human rights abuses against Sikhs residing in India, acts as a unifying agent for Diaspora Sikhs concerned with the plight of friends and family back home.

ISYF Links to Pakistan and Islamic Groups

Sources indicate that Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) is a long time supporter of the ISYF (Nandy, 2002; Pike, 2004; Gill, 2004). Allegedly, the ISI is responsible for providing training camps, large monetary funds, arms, and ammunition to members of pro-Khalistani groups, and the ISYF in particular.[28]

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[28] Although co-operation between the ISI and pro-Khalistani groups was at its height during the late 1980s and early 1990s, it still continues to some degree today. Within the past five years, investigators have uncovered a minimum of five tunnels crossing the international border, supposedly for the purpose of facilitating infiltration. Evidence also has surfaced recently suggesting Pakistan's involvement with the recruitment and training of Pakistani Muslims for the

The ISYF also associates with Pan-Islamist terrorist groups such as Lashkar-e-Toiba (LET), and LET's parent organization, Markaze-Dawat-War-Irshad. According to the *South Asia Intelligence Review*, ISI and Sikh militant groups such as ISYF often work together in an effort to build relations between Khalistani and Kashmiri militants, as they both share the common goal of carving out an independent state of Khalistan (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004).

Relations between Sikh militant groups and Islamic fundamentalist groups or Pakistani Intelligence are important in my discussion as it pertains to Canada. Reports indicate that "Canadian intelligence sources knew that ISYF pumped enormous amounts of money into Pakistan and India" but officials knew little about what happened to the funds once transferred to these nations (Jiwa, 1986). Canadian authorities are gravely concerned that militant Sikh groups (such as the ISYF) operate in Canada by fundraising and mobilizing funds to finance potential terrorist activities.

Babbar Khalsa

The third, and perhaps most militant, group operating in Canada is the Babbar Khalsa (BK). According to the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada:

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purpose of collaboration with existing Sikh militant groups within Pakistan as well as training Sikh youth at large, privately owned farmhouses in Muscat, Thailand, Dubai, and Iran (Gill, 2004).

> Babbar Khalsa (BK) and Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) continue to be one of the most vicious and powerful of the militant Sikh groups. Ideologically, members of the BK and BKI follow in the path of its historical namesake[,] Babbar Akalis, and thus vow to avenge the deaths of Sikhs killed in defense of the faith. Puritan in its conception of Sikhism, BK and BKI do not compromise on religious issues and thus spirituality is central to the groups' goal which is to establish a fundamentalist, independent Sikh state ('Assented to' Acts Service, 1996).

The group first formed in India in 1978 as an extremist outgrowth of the Akhand Kirtani Jatha. The head of Babbar Khalsa was a man named Sukhdev Singh Babbar, with Talwinder Singh Parmar (also known as Harpav Singh Parmar) leading the oversees wing, called Babbar Khalsa International.

The Babbar Khalsa became well known following the Sikh-Nirinkari clash in 1978. As Tatla (1999:120) explains, the group became a "staunch defender of Sikh orthodoxy," a position supported by the group's constitution that states its commitment to the creation of an independent state. In its constitution it vows to "work for the establishment of *Khalsa* rule where there would be no distinction on the basis of caste, colour, race, religion, origins or regional differences" (quoted in Tatla, 1999:120). Initially, however, the Babbar Khalsa focused on the preaching of orthodoxy, in most part due to its small following. Not until the late 1980s did the group began taking a more militant stance on issues pertaining to the creation of Khalistan.

According to Mahmood, the Babbar Khalsa differs somewhat from other guerrilla groups, being "perceived as very puritan in religious terms" and further, that "the spirituality that permeates the Babbars has led some experts to call them a cult rather than simply a guerrilla band " (1996:156). The terminology employed by BK members points to this 'puritan' display--instead of being referred to as generals, members within the BK movement refer to their leaders as *jathedar*. *Jathedar* literally means "captain," but because the term also refers to the leader of the Akal Takht (a Sikh-based, Indian political party), it has taken on a religious dimension. Mahmood (1996) likewise states that the term *jathedar* is loaded with religious and indigenous connotations and that its usage within the Babbar Khalsa movement illustrates the organization's puritan nature.

As with the ISYF, the BK movement has also suffered gravely from inner turmoil. At one time, rumours linking the group's most controversial leader, Talwinder Singh Parmar, with Indian intelligence ran rampant. As a result of these allegations, many followers maintained distance between themselves and Parmar. At the same time, Parmar had the attributes of a capable leader, and his fiery speeches, grandiosity, and determination inspired many.

Parmar came to Canada in the 1970s, but returned to India shortly afterward in order to participate in a 1982 Punjab sovereignty movement. Implicated in several criminal acts in the Punjab, Parmar fled India, only to spend a year in German prison until 1984.[29] He emerged from these events unscathed and enjoyed a particularly large following in British Columbia after his arrival in 1984.

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[29] Parmar was held in German prison in 1983 on an Interpol warrant awaiting extradition proceedings for the alleged murder of several individuals in India, as well as suspected assassination plots on then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi. Indian authorities were unable to prove any of the charges and Parmar was subsequently freed (Jiwa, 1986).

In 1988, Parmar again left Canada, this time to join the Punjab militant movement in Pakistan. October 15, 1992 saw the expulsion of Parmar from the event for his "anti-party activities." Shortly thereafter an alleged "police encounter" led to his death and the subsequent disposal of his "charred body" (Tatla, 1999:121). His expulsion from the event and unexplained death left questions in the minds of many about the circumstances surrounding these strange events. Yet, his gruesome death and the unceremonial burial of his body by Indian police, together with his passion and conviction of faith, bequeathed Parmar with martyr status. Acceptance, however, of his blossoming post-death popularity did not apply to all. Parmar's implication in the 1985 Air-India bombing upset many of the flight victims' families, as well as many non-Khalistani, or non-militant Sikhs. As such, the latter group was quick to dismiss his 'martyrdom' status.

Ultimately, the division between the followers of Parmar and those who did not approve of his leadership and tactics proved too strong, and the Babbar Khalsa organization split into two entities. Ajaib Singh Bagri and his supporters currently lead the (minority) followers of the late Talwinder Singh Parmar, while members of the main unit of the organization follow the leaderships of Gurdev Singh of Vancouver, and Rampal Singh in Toronto.

The Talwinder arm of the Babbar Khalsa has gained notoriety for its connection to the 1985 Air-India bombing. During Air-India proceedings, a former

Sikh priest told the B.C. Supreme Court that Ajaib Singh Bagri urged people to "'get your weapons ready so we can take revenge from [i.e., against] the Indian government'" (Bagri quoted in Bolan, 2003c). Both Bagri and Parmar pressed individuals to join their separatist group, stating "'Babbar Khalsa is the only party that can do something for Sikhism. So please join the Babbar Khalsa and get your weapons ready so we can take revenge from the Indian government'" (Bagri, quoted in Bolan, 2003c). Bagri and the late Parmar both were charged with conspiracy and murder in the 1985 Air-India bombing, but Bagri remains tangled in a lengthy trial throughout most of 2004.

As with the ISYF, the Babbar Khalsa also relied on funds provided by temple members to finance many of their endeavours. According to testimony provided by a former Sikh priest, "'the temple executive would collect money [from members of the temple] for the pair and their organization'" (quoted in Bolan, 2003c). Authorities believe that Parmar also relied heavily on funds provided by his followers (outside of temple donations), as well as funds donated by a rich (unnamed) Vancouver area businessman (Jiwa, 1986). Indirectly, however, the Babbar Khalsa organization managed to raise additional funds by attaining charitable status with the Canadian government. Just how the organization managed to attain charitable status, and why the status continued despite constant opposition from government officials and Canadian security services, remains a mystery.

According to Canadian government officials, charitable status applies to groups associated with such activities as the promotion of religion, education, certain social services, health, and relief of poverty (Charities, 2004). Alternately, according to Canadian law, any group with alleged terrorist links does not qualify for tax exemptions or charitable status. In a 1995 parliamentary hearing, MP Ms. Val Meredith challenged the Minster of National Revenue, the Honourable David Anderson, regarding the charitable status of Babbar Khalsa in Canada.

In a statement to the Minister of National Revenue, Meredith questioned the continued charitable status of the Babbar Khalsa, asking the minister to "explain what rationale his ministry used to ignore a protest from CSIS . . . that the Babbar Khalsa should be denied charitable status?" (Canada, 1995a). In an earlier response Anderson claimed that charity status had been maintained as "many in [the] group deal with immigrant groups in Canada" and that Meredith was "wrong to single out a particular organization of which there may be one or two individual members . . . and attempt to blacken the entire charitable status...." (Canada, 1995b). It is not clear to what type of immigration work the Minister of National Revenue was referring, but charitable status continued nonetheless, allowing the Babbar Khalsa organization to avoid paying taxes. Despite a retraction of the group's charitable status in 1996, Babbar Khalsa was still able to maintain a registered, not-for-profit organization status in B.C. (Bolan, 2003c).

It took roughly eighteen years after CSIS deemed BK and ISYF as threats to national security for the federal government to outlaw them as terrorist groups. In Canada, the ban means that any association or membership with the group, and fundraising for it, is illegal. In addition, authorities hold the right to seize any assets that the organization may own (Bolan, 2003c). Nevertheless, there exist more suspicions surrounding members of these militant groups than there exists actual convictions, and sources indicate that despite suspicions, many suspects continue to have clean police records (Mahmood, 1996).

Infighting

As illustrated in previous discussions, Sikh militancy is not a single entity. Divisions and orchestrations of militant groups into numerous forces and organizations often result in an abundance of infighting. According to Mahmood (1996:152), infighting is "as characteristic of this [militant] movement as is a certain external solidarity. Rifts between groups are expressed not only in vehement verbal arguments but in physical disagreements ranging from fist fights to shooting incidents." Scholars believe that the second assault on the Golden Temple in 1988 (coined Operation Black Thunder II by the Indian government), was the event that induced a reorganization of militant Sikh movements and set the stage for subsequent infighting amongst these groups (Mahmood, 1996:152). Operation Black Star followed the 1987 dismissal of elected state government official, Surjit Singh Barnala, by the central government. Barnala's dismissal raised questions in the minds of many Sikhs regarding their rights and liberties. Furthermore, the dismissal angered many Sikhs and renewed fervour amongst militant groups to pursue an independent Sikh homeland. According to Mahmood (1996:158), however, militants had little time to act. Around 1987 and 1988 "it became clear that the government was organizing hit squads to go after the [Sikh] militants entirely outside of the police and judicial apparatus," and these hit squad operations were "approved at the highest levels." Militants had to respond quickly to the high degree of government-sponsored terrorism in the Punjab--a difficult task given that the level of penetration into various militant organizations was on the rise.

The penetration of militant organizations meant the blurring of lines between "real" militants and government operatives who posed as militants. The confusion surrounding person and intent hit its peak when government operatives smuggled guns (that they later used in attacks against the militants within the complex) into the Golden Temple, despite heavily guarded entrances. That these so-called 'phoney militants' were able to bring weapons into the complex with such apparent ease, and for such deceptive purposes, raised questions as to the motives of certain militants inside the temple (i.e. were they on side with Indian officials? Were they being bribed by the Indian government?).

The 1988 operation, Black Thunder II, greatly differed from the 1984 operation, Blue Star, in its mode of attack. Whereas the first assault on the Golden Temple was a full-scale military raid, Operation Black Thunder II involved precision sniper attacks on militants only. This 'terror' method proved too menacing, and as a result, 192 militants emerged from the complex and surrendered to Indian police. The Indian government was quick to call the Operation a success and a victory in repressing terrorism. As Mahmood (1996:159) states, however, "the theatrical quality of the incident . . . and the doubts surrounding government involvement in militant organizations at the time, make it difficult to assess just what the outcome of Black Thunder II was in terms of actual effectiveness in curbing terrorism."

The events of Operation Black Thunder II reveal a pivotal point in the Sikh militant movement. Citing incidents such as the second temple assault as the subjugation of the Sikhs at the hands of the Indian government, militants renewed the demand for an independent state. Yet, despite this common goal, massive infighting erupted among militant groups, each accusing the other of collaborating with the Indian government in an attempt to undermine and threaten the Khalistan movement. Thus, the last assault on the Golden Temple complex launched years of infighting and animosity among militant groups and factions. Organizations collaborating with the Indian government no longer hold the same threat to the community as they once did. Today's militant groups, as illustrated through previous case examples, experience tremendous levels of infighting due to resource and power competition.

Although cases of Canadian-based Sikh militancy have dissipated over the past decade, groups and organizations that promote Sikh autonomy remain. Power control over temples has not disappeared but has shifted. Having lost power in recent *gurdwara* elections, some fundamentalists have opted to establish their own *gurdwaras*. Although there is no outward evidence that these *gurdwaras* fundraise and mobilize resources for militant endeavours, it does not eradicate the possibility that such events may be taking place. In a recent interview at the (now moderate) Guru Nanak Sikh *Gurdwara* in Surrey B.C., an official in the temple expressed his reservations, stating that despite the interdiction of the Babbar Khalsa by the Canadian government, pockets of religious extremists associated with the groups and with militant ties still exist.

They have simply moved underground and under a different designation (Sandhu, Amrik [pseud.], 2004).

Former Director General of Police in the Punjab, and current president of the Institute for Conflict Management, K.P.S. Gill, further confirms the existence of these pockets. According to Gill, "The 'defeated rump' of Khalistani terrorist organisations has dispersed widely across the world and continues to engage in a range of activities, including propaganda, international political mobilisation, mobilisation of funds, and recruitment" (Gill, 2004). Despite these legitimate claims, however, there is little question that the level of political violence has diminished since its height in the late 1980 and early 1990s. This diminishment may be in part due to the changing political landscape of India (the current Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, is Sikh), as well as growing support for moderate factions of diasporic communities. Through the height of the Khalistani movement, fundamentalists held control over most *gurdwaras* in the lower mainland of B.C. In the September 1996 elections, however, a change of power occurred as moderate parties dominated the polls and took control of many of the highly influential and highly lucrative temples.

That militant groups still exist both within the Punjab and abroad is beyond question. To some extent, political respite and the decrease of Sikh militancy within the Punjab have lessened militant ambitions abroad as well. If the opinions of those within the Canadian-Sikh community reflect reality, then the militant groups discussed herein continue to operate, albeit with a lesser breadth of support. While dangers posed by these groups are not imminent, the presence of these groups and their potential activities remain a challenge for Canadian authorities.

Chapter 6 - Fundamentalism and the Role of the *Gurdwara*

The expression "Sikh fundamentalist" often invokes images of full-bearded men clad in long-flowing saffron or blue robes, donning coloured turbans and *kirpans* (swords). While this image may not be an entirely accurate indicator of fundamentalist belief, there is nonetheless some truth to it. As I suggested earlier about these highly visible symbols and colours, they emerged during the creation of Gobind Singh's *khalsa*. Membership in the religio-military brotherhood was never compulsory--it was open to all those men and women who stood firm in their beliefs of piety and strength in the face of adversity. According to Dietrich (1993:123), "Throughout its history, only that part of the community professing greater religious fervour chose to undergo the specific initiation rite into the order to the *Khalsa*." Members of the *khalsa* are bound by strict codes of conduct. Among these codes, *khalsa* Sikhs are required to observe at all times the 5Ks, abstain from alcohol, drugs, and other intoxicants, pray daily from the holy scriptures, and strive to overcome what is known in Sikh belief as the five sins (anger, jealousy, pride, attachment, and overindulgence of sexual activity). Above all else, however, *khalsa* Sikhs must pledge themselves to the protection of the oppressed and marginalized, and to upholding the honour, integrity, and autonomy of the community.

So how is it that such meritorious behaviour sometimes leads to violent fundamentalist action? This chapter explores the various facets of Sikh fundamentalist belief as revealed, particularly, through the *gurdwara*. As I presented in the previous chapter, Sikh fundamentalism sees its enemies as being the 'lapsed' or un-baptized Sikhs and the secularized 'Hindu' government.

Not surprisingly, therefore, we see a fundamentalist reaction against both groups, so much so that Canadian Sikh fundamentalists want to eradicate them. In Canada, the term "Sikh fundamentalism" is quite often synonymous with the desire to establish an independent homeland of Khalistan. Some individuals, however, attempt to achieve this goal through violent and corrupt means, a *modus operandi* clearly allowed by the most famed Sikh fundamentalist, the late Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Achieving an independent homeland translates into a need for revenue and monetary resources. With their high source of income, *Gurdwaras* have become lucrative centres for fundamentalists seeking to finance pro-Khalistani efforts. In addition to *gurdwara* revenues, fundamentalists have undertaken in various other methods of fundraising, including tax fraud and questionable banking.

Early Splits Within the Community

Unable to negotiate any deviation from the orthodox and traditional system of belief, religious hardliners faced an overwhelming challenge upon their arrival in Canada. Having been under the laws of the so-called 'secularized government' of India, now they were under the so-called 'secular government' of Canada. Facing racism and experiencing sharp cultural adjustments, many newly-displaced Sikhs decided to melt into mainstream society (as discussed in Chapter 1). Ultimately, those who valued a more stringent approach to belief and practice gravitated away from the more progressive practitioners. The resulting fundamentalist/moderate divide continues within the Canadian-Sikh community, and the *gurdwara* became the locus of power struggles between the two sides.

Control and administration of B.C. temples reveals an interesting dynamic between moderates and fundamentalists. During the 1980s and early 1990s, members of the fundamentalist faction governed the majority of B.C.'s Sikh temples, and many of these fundamentalists allegedly had ties to militant organizations such as the Babbar Khalsa and the International Sikh Youth Federation (Macqueen, 2000). According to Mulgrew (1998:110), fundamentalists were able to win election battles for control over temples by "intimidating or denouncing their opponents as unworthy Sikhs." One of the few remaining fundamentalist temple presidents in Vancouver expressed that upon immigrating to Vancouver from India he found:

> 'Everywhere were Sikhs who had cut their hair and trimmed their beards . . . they also swore, drank liquor, and smoked marijuana. . . . I didn't go inside [the temple] because I didn't think it was a place of worship. I thought it was a club because everyone inside, except maybe two or three percent, were bareheaded and totally against the basic tenets of the religion' (quoted in Mulgrew, 1988:109).

This sentiment is particularly useful in our analysis as it reveals early tensions within the Sikh community that later led to a great divide.

In some instances, the rise of Sikh fundamentalism in Canada traces its roots to early migration. As discussed in Chapter1, the new social environment of Canada heavily influenced the early Sikh pioneers who often abandoned their traditional garb (including the turban) and shaved. The failure of many Sikhs to maintain the 5Ks, and their abandonment of the Sikh *reyat* (code of conduct) led to conflict within the community.

Two early episodes within the community illustrate this tension. In the first case members of the Khalsa Diwan Society raised objections to the waving of an unsheathed sword by an elderly priest during temple ceremonies. The subsequent decision to dispose of the practice was a blow to traditionalists who had long seen the act as a significant ingredient of temple rituals. In the second case, occurring in 1952, members of the Canadian Sikh community were asked to vote on a resolution to allow Sikhs who were shaven (and therefore were not properly observing the 5Ks) to serve on *gurdwara* councils. The resolution was passed, once again confirming the power of western influence and modernist values. As the 'Westernized' Sikhs continued to gain support with the Khalsa Diwan Society, those members of the community who adhered to more traditionalist values split, forming their own *gurdwara* called the Akali Singh.[30]

The racial tensions against Asians that existed within Canada also played a critical role in the degeneration of Sikh values and the adoption of Western ways of life. According to Narindar Singh (1994:82), the number of Sikhs who kept an outward observance of the 5Ks dramatically declined (with the purpose of better assimilation into the host nation), and with the decline in Asian migration, there was no influx of migrants to reinforce core Sikh values. The relaxation of immigration bans, however, and the arrival of new Sikh migrants to Canada, fostered a set of new conflicts. As previously mentioned, new Sikh migrants often were highly educated and skilled professionals, while the older ones were unskilled labourers. Very often, new migrants were quite orthodox in their views, and did not encounter the same type of racism as had their predecessors. Thus, the impetus to abandon outward forms of religious observances lost momentum. At the same time, many new migrants were quick to abandon Sikh traditions, and opted for shorn hair and Western wear.

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[30] The Akali Singh was the first temple that considered itself openly orthodox and that required all of its members to cover their heads inside the prayer hall in respect for the holy book, the *Guru Granth Sahib* (SikhNet, 2004).

Interestingly, ideological clashes between the two sides (the "Westernized" and the "traditionalists") played themselves out in the establishment that had come to symbolize unity, harmony, and brotherhood--the Sikh holy temple--the *gurdwara*. Newly arrived orthodox Sikhs began to demand "a return to orthodoxy" within *gurdwaras*. Conflicts between members of the orthodox side and members of the moderates' side soon began to spread to other issues. Members of the community drew lines of division involving such factors as caste, period of immigration, level of assimilation, and economic and social status. As Narindar Singh (1994:84) explains:

> The problems of the community are obviously complex. They intertwine social, economic, and caste conflict and at the heart of all is religious tradition. This complex phenomenon surfaces in the form of the *gurdwara* clashes. The stability of fifty years of assimilation and peace were obviously gone for good. It seemed obvious the nature of the quarrels were religiously oriented and the . . . Sikh community had entered into a period of internal conflict and change.

The ideological differences that began in the early stages of Sikh migration to Canada still remain under the designation of 'moderate' and 'fundamentalist' and continue to plague the Canadian-Sikh community, resulting sometimes in deadly consequences.

'Fallen Sikhs'

For many modern-day Sikh fundamentalists, their greatest enemy continues to be the 'fallen Sikh.' Through an examination of a collection of audio- and videotapes of sermons delivered by Sikhism's most famed fundamentalist, Jarnil Singh Bhindranwale, Juergensmeyer (2001:89) concludes that what the preacher and leader "disdained--indeed loathed" more than anything else was what he called "the enemies of religion." These enemies of religion included fellow Sikhs who had "fallen from the disciplined fold and sought the comforts of modern life" (Juergensmeyer, 2000:91). For many Sikh fundamentalists the term 'fallen Sikhs' translates loosely into members of the moderate community who remain un-baptized, and whose ignorance towards age-old traditions (such as consumption of *langar* [post-service meal] on the floor) and political issues (such as the creation of a Sikh homeland) are not conducive to the precepts of the faith.

According to Williams (1988:81), moderates and fundamentalists often take on very distinct attitudes for example, with the moderates favouring negotiation with the government of India, and the fundamentalists favouring armed resistance and the establishment of an independent state of Khalistan. These ideological differences, however, have mobilized from theory into practice with great cost to the community. Moderate Sikhs in Canada who either have opposed the Khalistan issue, and the militant activity associated with it, or have questioned the absoluteness of scriptural authority have come under attack by fundamentalists, often with deadly consequences. In February 1995, a man wielding an iron bar attacked Punjabi-born lawyer and current federal Minister of Health, Ujjal Dosanjh. Police believed it to be the work of fundamentalists who felt that Dosanjh, with his high-profile position, (at the time he was B.C.'s provincial Attorney General), was not taking an affirmative stance on the Khalistan issue and had openly criticized Sikh violence (Hunter and Wood, 2000).

In another high-profile Canadian case, Tara Singh Hayer (1936-1998) founder of the *Indo-Canadian Times*, was shot to death in Surrey, British Columbia on November 18, 1998. An outspoken member of the Sikh community, Hayer had been a target of previous attacks. In 1998, an assassination attempt left Hayer partially paralyzed and confined to a wheelchair. A supporter of the moderate side of the factional strife, Hayer targeted "violent Sikh fundamentalists seeking the leadership of the Western province's 70,000 Sikhs, and an independent Sikh homeland in India" (International Press Institute, 2003). In July of 1999, Surrey RCMP identified a young Edmonton resident and member of the separatist International Sikh Youth Federation as a suspect in the murder of Mr. Hayer. The RCMP did not lay charges against the man, who adamantly denied having taken any part in the death of Mr. Hayer. He did admit, however, to being close to many federation leaders in the Vancouver area.[31] Subsequently, a man by the name of Harkirat Singh Bagga (who apparently had close links to the Babbar Khalsa) was convicted in Hayer's murder in 1998 (Rediff, 1999:1-2).

Hayer, Dosanjh, and numerous others like them serve as examples of victims of fundamentalist attacks in Canada. Despite claims by fundamentalists that they are simply 'lapsed Sikhs,' moderates maintain their position as Sikhs that are true to their faith, but are not *khalsa* Sikhs, and do not necessarily believe in the creation of a Sikh homeland.[32] Many moderates feel a close connection with their Indian homeland and do not wish to separate from it. As Reasoner (1984) explains, for many of these moderates their Sikh identity supersedes their Indian and Punjabi heritage. This fashion of self-identification, however, does not mean that moderates are indifferent to Sikh autonomy. In 1981, H.S. Longowal, a moderate Sikh and religious leader, spoke at the World Sikh Convention in Amritsar, and is his speech urged Sikhs to "take direct action to achieve autonomy, but not outright independence for Punjab" (Singh, Ajay, 2003). Autonomy of faith (but not necessarily self-rule) holds a privileged place amongst the moderates. The dividing factor between moderates and fundamentalists is how Sikhs should achieve this autonomy.

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[31] Among those federation leaders whom the suspect was in contact with was Sikh high priest, Ranjit Singh. Ranjit Singh was the subject of several [negative] editorials penned by Hayer. Hayer had written the articles after Ranjit Singh excommunicated him for his support of liberal-minded Canadian-Sikhs.

The Amritdhari Sikh

Amritdhari (or baptized, lit. *amrit* taker) Sikhs (initiated members of the *khalsa* who display the articles of faith and remain unshaven) do not necessarily consider themselves as being 'fundamentalist' in belief; rather, they believe that they are simply following the correct path as set out by the gurus. While many *amritdhari* Sikhs do not dismiss *sahajdhari* (shaven, non-*khalsa*) Sikhs as being 'true Sikhs,' they do assume that perhaps they are not as pious as *amritdhari* Sikhs, or alternatively that they simply have not yet taken the path of the *khalsa*, but that eventually they will become *khalsa* Sikhs through slow stages (Singh, Harpreet [pseud.], 2004). This one substantial difference that exists between *amritdharis* and *sahajdharis*, however, has long been a cause for dispute. Axel (2001:36) points out that the *amritdhari* body "has attained a hegemonic quality so extensive that all other ways of being a Sikh are constituted in relation to it -- particularly, to put it crudely, through a relation of being not *amritdhari*." Indeed, in various interviews with members of fundamentalist *gurdwaras*, several *amritdharis* expressed their belief that *sahajdhari* or *mona* Sikhs (*mona* refers to those Sikhs who believe in and respect the teachings of Sikhism, but do not express it outwardly through unshorn hair and religious dress) cannot be considered Sikhs per se. "They are non-believers, how can you be a Sikh, but not practice it the way that you are told to by the gurus and [then] make up your own practice. No they are not Sikhs" (Sidhu, Sandeep [pseud.], 2004). This attitude appears continuously in the discourse of Sikh fundamentalism. While I do not wish to suggest that all *amritdhari* Sikhs are fundamentalist, I would suggest that members whom either the media or the community itself identifies as fundamentalist, almost exclusively are *amritdhari*.

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[32] Many moderates defend their non-*khalsa* status, stating that membership in the *khalsa* from the time of its inception always has been voluntary. Therefore, *khalsa* membership reflects personal choice–not one's level of religiosity (Mangat, Jaspal [pseud.], 2004).

The reason that the *amritdhari* Sikh is important to the discussion at hand is in its relevance to the issue of Khalistan. As pious followers of religious authority, *amritdhari* Sikhs also are followers of *Desh-kaal*, a *khalsa* discourse regarding the inseparability of religion and politics. Some scholars argue that the notion of Khalistan, which literally translates into Land of the Pure, essentially was put in place under the guru, Gobind Singh, who was acting upon an earlier decree put fourth by Guru Hargobind. As previously discussed, it was Guru

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Hargobind who first introduced the concept of divine rule (*miri/piri*) with one sword representing temporal rule, and the other one representing spiritual authority (effectively representing theocratic governance). According to Axel (2001:93) many Sikh scholars argue that the doctrine of *miri/piri* came to its full expression under the rule of Guru Gobind Singh who created a new quam reflecting this expression, with the introduction of the *khalsa* and the *amritdhari* Sikh. Thus, many who favour the establishment of an independent homeland come from the perspective that all Sikhs who follow in the path of the guru by remaining *amritdhari* must also recognize the mandate of *desh-kaal* (the inseparability of religion and politics)--and thus strive for the creation of a Sikh nation.

The Fight for Khalistan

A prominent feature of fundamentalist *gurdwaras* (particularly among the Canadian diaspora community) is what I refer to as the 'mural of martyrs.' While all *gurdwaras* house pictures of (mostly historical) Sikh martyrs, fundamentalist *gurdwaras* are unique in their collection of vividly grotesque, disconcerting, and very current pictures of the dead. The pictures typically depict young Sikh men who were beaten and brutally tortured at the hands of the Indian government (please refer to appendix 10). Yet these pictures, as shocking as they are, are essential tools in creating a sharp awareness of the plight of the Sikhs in India, thus serving to affirm pro-Khalistani efforts. This type of graphic representation is also prominent in most pro-Khalistani websites. (For instance, the Canadian website <www.saintsoldiers.net> alone has over 45 graphic pictures of Sikh-related deaths.) While by definition not all Sikh separatists are fundamentalists and/or militants (indeed there are Sikhs who desire an independent homeland, but prefer negotiation and non-violence in achieving such ends), my research thus far indicates a strong correlation between those Sikhs who have pursued militant means in achieving an independent homeland and association with fundamentalist groups (including fundamentalist *gurdwaras*, or organizations such as the Babbar Khalsa). The question that begs to be answered is why some individuals embrace terrorist tactics for achieving their separatist goal, often resulting in death.

Khalistan - A Brief Overview

Khalistan is the proposed independent Sikh homeland that would encompass the current area of the Punjab as well as a portion of Pakistan. Ideally, Khalistan would be ruled according to the principles of *halemi-raj* (humanitarian, equality, and justice [Mann, Inderjit [pseud.], 2004]). Because rulers and subjects would be followers of the same religious ideology, (theoretically) there would be little room for corruption and iniquity. Numerous interviews at fundamentalist temples reveal the same sentiment -- the only way that there could be an end to the carnage suffered by Sikhs in India by the hand of the Indian government is through the establishment of an independent homeland. For pious Sikhs, thus, it becomes their divine duty to pursue such a goal, in fulfilling the earlier mandates of Hargobind and Gobind Singh.

For all intents and purposes, the issue of Khalistan is not a new one, but it did remain somewhat inconspicuous until the 1980s. During this period, Sikhs in India witnessed significant events that tested the stability of their faith, including the government's 1984 siege of the Golden Temple, and the ensuing anti-Sikh riots of 1984 following the assassination of Indira Gandhi at the hands of her two

Sikh-bodyguards. Heightened levels of violence and the mass-murder of some 10,000 to 100,000 individuals in the Punjab created the impetus for many to transform the *notion* of Khalistan into a physical reality (Axel, 2001:5).

Of course, there were other persisting factors that helped create an environment that furthered members' calls for change. The 1960s 'Green Revolution,' for example, saw the transformation of Punjab's substinence farming into an agricultural industry. The move towards a more industrialized *modus operandi* resulted in a sudden influx of monies into the Punjab, making it one of India's most lucrative provinces. As Weiss (2002:5) states:

> The radical changes entailed by the green revolution have been critical to the development of the Khalistan movement. Small farmers have been marginalized, alienated, and dislocated. The government combated shortages in particular areas by preventing the free sale of agricultural products. . . . Official repression has propelled aggrieved peasants into armed struggle on ethno-regional lines. . . . Uneven development has also aggravated environmental disorders. . . . Akalis have identified the central government, dominated by the Hindu bourgeoisie, as the culprit to give a target to these grievances.

Since the 1980s, many Sikhs have participated in the revival of various pro-Khalistani movements, but most of the support for these movements comes from Sikh expatriates abroad, especially those in Canada. In fact, the diaspora community has advanced greatly the Sikh's pro-Khalistani efforts. Deol (2000) attributes the diasporic support of a Sikh state to feelings of estrangement from the homeland resulting from migration, the need to assert themselves as an authentic and powerful community, and the strong ties that diasporic Sikhs have maintained with their homeland (as discussed in chapter 1). Mahmood (1996:254) offers an interesting perspective on the role of the Sikh diaspora and Khalistani efforts. According to her, "it seems clear that the power of the Khalistan idea is enhanced, not diminished, by the dispersion of Sikhs outside of Punjab and India. And this is expressed in monetary, political, and moral support for Khalistan from diasporic Sikhs despite the fact that many or most would not move to Khalistan if it were indeed created." Furthermore, as evident with previous discussions about the ghadar party, the diaspora community represents a vital resource for Punjabi politics. Among other things, Sikh expatriates are able to provide funds, mobilize resources, and create and maintain contacts with various human rights organizations.

In fact, the utility of diaspora Sikhs was responsible for launching the matter of Khalistan onto the international stage. On October 12, 1971 the *New York Times* ran a half-page advertisement calling for the creation of a new independent homeland for Sikhs. The person behind the advertisement, Jagjit Singh Chauhan, was a former Akali Dal member and ex-member of the Indian state legislative assembly who had previously organized campaigns abroad in order to raise awareness about the situation facing the Sikhs in India. Later he declared himself as the president of Khalistan, and went so far as to open several consular offices in various countries, unveiling a Khalistani flag, and even issuing Khalistani currency and passports (Khalistan Dreamer, 2001). (Please refer to appendix 11.)

Since this period, the establishment of Khalistan has remained a priority particularly amongst diasporic fundamentalist Sikhs. While the movement has lost momentum in recent years, the Sikh community in Canada is still feeling the ill effects of scandal and violence that erupted as a result of the movement in the late 1980s and early 1990s. During this period, Canada witnessed the horrific bombing of an Air-India flight, and Sikh temples--because of their sheer earning potential--became of particular importance to fundamentalists seeking to raise funds for the Khalistan effort.

Air-India

The definitive split between moderates and fundamentalists occurred over the case of the Air-India bombing. The Air-India Flight 182 bombing off the coast of Ireland is one of the best known events linked to Canadian-Sikh fundamentalists in recent history. The case of the Air-India bombing has become one of the lengthiest, most elaborate, and expensive investigations in Canadian history (Correia, 2003:1). The investigation has employed over 200 RCMP task force members, spanning 3 continents and 6 countries, and has cost the Canadian government a reported $25 million. The case has gained notoriety both within the Sikh community and outside of it, due to botched police investigations, allegations of destroyed evidence by Canada's Intelligence Service, CSIS, and involvement of high-profile government officials (Nicol, 2000:4; RCMP, 1992:1).[33]

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[33] In 1985, as a part of security checks for Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's planned visit to North America, the Canadian government (under Prime Minister Brian Mulroney) instructed officials to keep close surveillance on Sikh militants who posed a potential threat to the visit. (Tensions were still running high due to the events of 1984 Operation Blue Star.) Officials

The RCMP have accused fanatical Sikh militants living in Canada of the planning and execution of the Air-India bombing in order to attract attention to the Khalistan issue. According to the RCMP, "part of the police theory was that Air-India aircrafts were legitimate targets because they were highly visible symbols of the Indian government" (CBC News Online, 2004). Canada's other intelligence agency, The Canadian Security Intelligence Services (CSIS), was interested particularly in Talwinder Singh Parmar as a suspect in the case. A confidential CSIS document refers to Parmar as "a Sikh extremist," and an individual who portrays himself as "the High Priest of the Sikh religion, the leading pro-Khalistan Sikh in Canada, and leader of the Sikh Independence Movement in North America. He presents himself as the self-appointed successor to the deceased Sikh militant leader, Sant Bhindranwale" (Federal Court of Canada, 1985:2-3). Parmar used every opportunity that he could to rally Canadian Sikhs and urge them to fight. On July 15, 1984, in Calgary, Alberta, Parmar appealed to congregation members of the Coach Temple to "unite, fight, and kill" in order to avenge the attack on the Golden Temple (Parmar quoted in Federal Court of Canada, 1985:3).

CSIS affidavits also refer to two other incidents in which Parmar openly advocated the use of violence. On July 21, 1984, Parmar addressed several Toronto area *gurdwaras*, stating to the congregation that "Sikhs will kill 50,000 Hindus; Sikhs will harass Hindus, Indian embassies, High Commissions, and

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immediately placed Talwinder Singh Parmar under 24-hour surveillance. In one of the largest unexplainable security lapses of the case, intelligence officers suspended surveillance on Parmar the day that the bombs, intended for Air-India flight 182, reportedly were delivered to the Vancouver International Airport. In another inexplicable blunder following the Air-India bombing, the RCMP were quick to lay charges on Parmar and others, but had to drop them later due to a host of legal and procedural drawbacks (CBC News Online, 2004).

Consulate personnel; Sikhs will blow up embassies; and Sikhs will not sit back, but will take revenge on the Hindu government (in India)." On July 23, 1984, in Windsor, Ontario, Parmar spoke regarding Sikh involvement in terrorist activities, stating, "there would be no backlash upon the Sikh community for Sikh terrorism because he would take all the responsibility on his shoulders." At an August 31, 1984 press conference, Parmar, in a most poignant statement, claimed that his ultimate goal "is to achieve a Sovereign State. Any Sikh who doesn't ask for a Sovereign State is a traitor" (Parmar, quoted in Federal Court of Canada, 1985:4). Evidence and testimonies collected by government officials support the notion that carving out an independent state appears to be the supreme goal for many fundamentalists.

A 1995 witness statement compiled by the RCMP refers to another one of the accused in the Air-India case--Ajaib Singh Bagri. According to the statement, Bagri is described as "the Canadian leader of the Babbar Khalsa . . . a Sikh fundamentalist group that promotes Khalistan through violent means," a man who "did not like non-baptized Sikhs," and who "wanted the government of India to come on their knees and give them Khalistan" (RCMP, 1995: doc. no. 109815). In a 2004 interview, a senior official of a B.C. temple stated regarding Ajaib Singh Bagri and Ripudaman Singh Malik:

> Mr. Amandip Mahal - "We know them very well . . . we have seen them so many times. . . . Everyone knows who did it in our community but no one is going to provide the evidence because everyone is feeling that they will get themselves killed."
>
> Interviewer - "Get their own families killed?"

> Mr. Amandip Mahal - ". . . they have their own persons who are militant. . . " (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004).

While many moderates believe that Talwinder Singh Parmar, Ajaib Singh Bagri, Ripudaman Singh Malik, and their body of people are responsible for the heinous Air-India crime, some members of the fundamentalist community quickly insist on these individuals' innocence and instead point to who they believe to be the true masterminds behind the crime--the Indian government. Regardless of whether or not these accusations are true,[34] it will suffice to say that for many Canadian-Sikh fundamentalists, the Indian government, together with those Sikhs or non-Sikhs who continue to question them, remain their sworn enemies.

Dislike for these two-fold enemies is extensive throughout the fundamentalist community, and it is most elaborately articulated in response to the Air-India trial and the media coverage that it has received. Mr. Sandeep Sidhu, a former member of the Guru Nanak temple in Surrey, was one of the first individuals to start attending the newly-founded Dasmesh Darbar temple which lies roughly 15 minutes away from the Guru Nanak temple. According to Mr. Sidhu, he was motivated to move to the newly-formed *gurdwara* as he felt that the religious belief and practice in this *gurdwara* more clearly reflected the notions of Sikhism. "Things are traditional here, Sikhs here are true Sikhs, we are all baptized here. We care about what is happening to our brothers back home. . . . [I]t is our duty . . . to protect them" (Sidhu, Sandeep [pseud.], 2004).

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[34] A 1989 book by two Canadian Journalists entitled *Soft Target* suggests that Canadian officials were inept in their investigation of the Air-India bombing. The book also provides substantial evidence that the Indian government may have been behind the explosion. Many pro-Khalistani Sikhs refer to this book as evidence of Indian governmental corruption.

Mr. Sidhu speaks with an authority that is reinforced by the presence of two large banners that hang soberly in the adjacent hall. The banners read "Khalistan Zindabad" and "Raj Karega Khalsa" ("Long live Khalistan" and the "*Khalsa* shall rule"). (Please refer to appendix 12 for an example of the banner.) He reinforces the widely held fundamentalist opinion that the Air-India tragedy was committed by the government of India, as a ploy to discredit and to dishonor the Canadian-Sikhs. Mr. Sidhu believes that the government would undertake such an act for the purpose of "sending out a message" to those who continue to petition for Khalistan (Sidhu, Sandeep [pseud.], 2004).

The belief that the Air-India tragedy was planned and executed by the Indian government is an opinion that, despite the existence of vast contrary evidence, continues to be shared by other groups associated with fundamentalist practice. A spokesman for the World Sikh Organization maintains that "CSIS has been infiltrated and misinformed by agents of the Indian Intelligence Services" (Nicol, 2000). The Council of Khalistan (currently operating out of Washington D.C.) also accuses both the Canadian government of arresting "innocent Sikhs" in the Air-India case, and the RCMP for undermining the possibility that the bombing "was an Indian government operation" (Swami, 2003:4). And the culpability of the government does not end there. According to Sidhu, members of the Canadian media (such as Kim Bolan of the Vancouver Sun and the Vancouver Sun itself) are guilty of being "paid-off by the Indian government" so as to spread incorrect and injurious stories regarding the Sikh community (Sidhu, Sandeep [pseud.], 2004). The protests, however, carry little leverage. An internal RCMP document states, "Media reports and books which have been written on the Air-India disaster have speculated about the involvement of the Government of India. The RCMP does not have evidence to support this theory" (RCMP, 1992: 185512:11). So it remains that where the Air-India trial is concerned, members of Canada's two polar Sikh communities, the moderates and the fundamentalists, remain steadfast, and immeasurably divided upon the issue.

The Gurdwara as a Vehicle of Fundamentalism

Sikhs believe the *gurdwara* to be the home of the Guru (God), and a sacred place where the *Guru Granth Sahib* (the Sikh holy book) is housed. The *gurdwara* carries out three main functions. First, it is a location where Sikhs sing *kirtan* (hymns) from the *Guru Granth Sahib*. Second, the *gurdwara* is where they recite *katha*, (a reading and explanatory sermon of the *Guru Granth Sahib*). Finally, Sikhs use the *gurdwara* for the purpose of serving and consuming of *langar* (a free communal meal open to all members of society regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity). Outside of religious practice, the *gurdwara* also acts as a space for socialization. Very often members of the *sangat* (the assembly) drop in for conversation and a meal. Increasingly however, a group of Sikhs are also using the *gurdwara* as a vehicle of political and religious assertion. Questions have arisen within the community as to the role of the *gurdwara* as a mechanism of fundraising. Many members of Canada's moderate Sikh community allege that Canadian-Sikh fundamentalists utilize *gurdwaras* to fundraise, with a large portion of the funds directly going to finance the fight for an independent homeland in India.

Fundraising within the Gurdwaras

Albeit not mandatory, members of the Sikh *sangat* regularly donate money to their local temples.[35] Monetary donations typically occur in one of two fashions. Either members submit a sum into a small donation box at the front of the prayer hall (directly located in front of the holy books) called the *golak* or else they may donate money at a table that usually is set up outside the prayer hall and manned by members of the temple staff. While it is common to provide receipts (at the request of the donator) for the latter type, donations made to the *golak* are always anonymous and do not have receipts issued. Commonly, members of the *gurdwara* staff together with volunteer members of the congregation collect and count the money at the end of Sunday services.

Monetary donations to a *gurdwara* are by no means small. From early on *gurdwaras* have been a source of great revenue. By its own account, before 1921 the Vancouver Khalsa Diwan society collected and contributed over $250,000 to various political and social causes (please refer to appendix 9). The Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara in Surrey B.C. has a reported income of $1 million a year with assets valued at more than $5 million (Hunter and Wood, 2000). The Vancouver based newspaper, *The Asian Pacific Post*, citing financial records from one Edmonton-based temple, shows assets upwards of $5 million (Hunter, 2002:C9). Public records filed by various *gurdwaras* are indicative of just how much money these centres are capable of raising. Mississauga's Ontario Khalsa Darbar temple declared $757,227 in its 2001 tax filing. Malton's Sri Guru Singh Sabha declared $548,514. Smaller *gurdwaras* such as the North York Sikh

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[35] Sikh doctrine normally dictates that members make a donation roughly equivalent to ten percent of total net income.

Temple and Winnipeg's Sikh Society of Manitoba raise anywhere between $200,000 to $300,000 per year (Manon, Rajbir [pseud.], 2004; Toronto Star, 2002).

Questions regarding temple funds have caused some dissident members of one temple, the Nanaksar Gurdwara-Gursikh Temple in Richmond B.C., to take their allegations to the Supreme Court of Canada. They are demanding an independent auditor to investigate the temple's financial affairs from 1994 to 2002. Among other things, the dissidents allege that the congregation makes donations to the temple in excess of $1.2 million annually, but that directors and administrators have failed to make financial statements available to the members (Hunter, 2002:C9).[36] Practitioners also accuse the leaders of the temple of gambling and impaired driving--stunning revelations in light of the fact that members of this particular group are renowned for their strict adherence to religious tenets. The main accusations behind the petition include:

i) that the directors of the society have wrongfully conferred much or all of the authority for the running of the society and the temple to the preacher, Harnek Singh Grewal;

ii) that Mr. Grewal has told one of the practitioners, Madho Singh Pandher, that he (Mr. Grewal) lost $45,000 of the society's money while gambling in Las Vegas;

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[36] Adding to the controversy surrounding this particular temple, and perhaps a fact that sheds some light on fundamentalist behaviour, is that the Richmond temple in question was co-founded by Surjit Singh Badesha. Badesha, who is originally from Maple Ridge B.C., was accused of hiring a gang to kidnap his niece, Jaswinder Kaur Sidhu, and kill the man whom she secretly married against her family's wishes in 1999. Currently both Badesha and his wife are wanted for extradition by the Punjabi police ("Film Probes Death in an Arranged Sikh Marriage," 2001).

iii) that Mr. Grewal has consumed alcohol while at the temple and that he was convicted by the Provincial Court of Alberta on or about May 5, 2000 for impaired driving. Court records show that Mr. Grewal claimed to be a laborer at the time;

iv) that the society has purchased a property at 10300 Palmberg Road, Richmond for $525,000, to construct a 6,500 square foot house and that this is not a proper use of the society's monies. An affidavit in support of the petition also alleges that the house costing about $500,000 is for the 65-year old preacher who recently married a 25-year-old woman in India;

v) that the congregation makes financial donations exceeding one million dollars annually but that the directors have failed to make financial statements available to the membership (*The Asian Pacific Post*, 2002).

The Edmonton branch of the society is very lucrative also. Financial records reveal that the Edmonton division alone has assets of $5,088,090.36 (*The Asian Pacific Post*, 2003).

Since the moderate faction has gained control of the temples (first in Surrey in 1996 and then in Ross Street and Abbotsford in 1998), they have found themselves in the midst of a scandal involving missing funds from temple donations. The president of the Guru Nanak temple in Surrey, for example, alleges missing financial documents that he speculates reveal that the institution (with its over 32,0000 members) has surreptitiously been financing the fight for Khalistan (Transnational Communities Programme, 2003). Temple officials claim that upon the moderates' takeover, the temple was run down and heavily mortgaged, despite the large influx of money – $22,000 weekly.[37] Since the takeover the weekly income has become less due to the movement of some members to another fundamentalist temple. According to one temple official, "'the first year we took over this temple, in 1996, we paid out all the mortgage, $848,000, in one year. And we did some construction work. In the ten years before, nothing had been done to the temple: no construction, no repairs, no renovation'" (quoted in Macqueen, 2000). Lack of financial records combined with poor book-keeping of temple funds reveals what many moderates believe to be the direct financing of various Khalistani endeavours back home. In order to thwart any future abuse of temple donations, many temples now have structured well-controlled methods of fund collection. These include: revolving congregation volunteers who collect and count monies on a weekly basis, an open-books record keeping, registration with government, and in some cases, the installation of video surveillance cameras throughout the temple in locations where monies are donated and counted (Lal, Harjot [pseud.], 2004).

In addition to missing funds, temples under fundamentalist control also may be the location for more activities. New officials at the Guru Nanak temple contend that, while under fundamentalist control, many political activities took place within the *gurdwara*, including campaign photocopying, telephoning, and various meetings (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004). Among the main figures accused of such activities is one of the same men accused in the Air-India bombing--Vancouver businessman and millionaire Ripudaman Singh Malik. Malik was well known within the community for his ability to mobilize fundamentalist support and money, and was a persistent figure in political affairs.[38] According to temple officials, Malik also was successful in "drawing ground troops from the independent orthodox Khalsa school in Surrey, which he led through charitable organizations, as well as from fundamentalist temples" (Macqueen, 2000). Thus, the *gurdwara* became the medium through which he and others vigilantly carried out fundamentalist activities.

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[37] During an interview, Mr. Amandip Mahal stated that for the ten years that the fundamentalists had control over the temple, two-thirds of this weekly donation was being used to finance militancy in the Punjab (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004).

In 1994 the Canadian government revoked the charitable status of these Sikh *gurdwaras* in Toronto. (The three temples are Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Shromani Singh Sangat, and the 269 Pape Ave. *gurdwara*). The temples in question allegedly were issuing phony charitable tax receipts, while failing to file tax returns. Furthermore, the government was suspicious of political links that the temples may have had with terrorist organizations in India. Sikh leaders of the moderate faction in Toronto claim that the three temples in question are under the control of members of the Babbar Khalsa International and the International Sikh Youth Federation. According to Irvinderpaul Singh Babra, a moderate Sikh and publisher of *Sikh Press*, "these temples are not private properties. They should be accountable to the people. But they are being used as private properties by members of the (ISYF) and the Babbar Khalsa..." (Babra, quoted in *Toronto Star*, 2002). In a letter to temple leaders in November 2001, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency declared, "It is a matter of concern to us as to whether or not the affairs of the Temple have been, and are being, managed in such a way that they may serve to promote the political objective of an independent Khalistan" (*Toronto Star*, 2002).

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[38] Malik was heavily involved in the B.C. political arena, from attending fundraising dinners for former Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to making large scale financial donations to Surrey-Centre Canadian Alliance MP Gurmant Grewal (Nicol, 2000).

Outside the *gurdwara*, members of the fundamentalist faction undertake other methods of fundraising, including personal campaigning, social events, and attainment of government grants and status.[39] In 2000, supporters of Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Singh Bagri held a fundraising dinner in order to raise money to cover the legal expenses incurred by the two suspects in the Air-India trial. Reports indicate that anywhere between $70,000 and $300,000 was raised that evening through voluntary donations (Bolan, 2000a).

In another high-profile Canadian case, documents obtained by the *National Post* from the Department of Foreign Affairs claim that thirty-nine-year-old B.C. resident, Gurbax Kaur, who was killed in India in 1999, was "part of a terrorist group which raised funds in Canadian Sikh temples" (Bolan, 2000b). Authorities believe that Kaur who allegedly was a member of the Canadian faction of the Babbar Khalsa, channelled funds collected in Canada through the Khalsa school in Surrey B.C. (In 1997, RCMP investigated as to why Tejinder Pal Singh, who was a convicted hijacker, was living in the basement of the school, as well as why the International Sikh Youth Federation was permitted to hold meetings at the Khalsa school.) Coincidentally, the Khalsa school in Surrey B.C. is headed by the same man who heads the Khalsa Credit Union of B.C.--Air-India suspect Ripudaman Singh Malik. The Khalsa Credit Union has over 1,700 members, assets upwards of $110 million, and in addition receives more than $33 million dollars in government funding from British Columbia annually (TajaNews, 2003).[40] Last year, Canadian Police issued several search warrants against the credit union in order to investigate allegations of fund misuse.[41] In a related 2003 story, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) revealed a large-scale GST scam by several Sikh businessmen. Police charged Sikhander Singh Bath and Manjit Singh Kanghura in the largest GST fraud case to make it to court. The two men allegedly received more than $22 million dollars from Ottawa in unearned GST refunds which they deposited and cashed through the Khalsa Credit Union. Canadian Alliance and Tory opposition spokespeople questioned whether or not the $22 million was "used to fund terrorist activities" (Bell and Hanson, 2001). Many members of the moderate faction believe that fundamentalists continue to use institutions such as the temple, the school, and the credit union for purposes of fund raising and mobilization in the pro-Khalistan cause (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004; Singh, Malik [pseud.], 2004).

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[39] In a recent interview with a member of the Edmonton-Sikh community, the interviewee claimed that known members of the fundamentalist faction regularly visited the homes of area Sikhs asking for monetary donations. Author Narindar Singh (1994:128) admits accompanying members of the Babbbar Khalsa to households in the Toronto and Montreal areas for the purpose of fundraising.

A senior vice-president of the Guru Nanak Temple in Surrey, Mr. Amandip Mahal, stressed the frustrations that many members of the moderate community feel who try desperately to remedy the fraudulent situations of the past. But according to Mr. Mahal, the fundamentalist mentality continues to operate. The ability to misuse funds, Mr. Mahal points out, is a direct result of the management of these temples. As Mahal claims, the fundamentalist temple in Surrey is operated by a tightly knit group of only five or six individuals--a stark contrast to other *gurdwaras* where there are regular elections for temple administrators, and all members of the congregation above the age of eighteen are eligible to run for various positions (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004).

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[40] Members of the fundamentalist faction also attain funds through the government. A 1990s CSIS document states that two B.C. temples that were under the control of the International Sikh Youth Federation each received $1million in provincial grant money, in addition to the Babbar Khalsa Society that maintained charitable status in Canada for an extended period of time (Nicol, 2000).

[41] RCMP are investigating the misappropriation of funds at the Khalsa School as well as the Satnam Trust. The trust was set up for the purpose of assisting families of Sikhs in India and/or Canada who have died or are imprisoned due to their Khalistani efforts. The trust refers to such individuals as 'martyrs' of the Sikh cause (Pais, 1999).

Tables and Chairs

Another matter that has created a schism between moderates and fundamentalists, particularly in the Lower Mainland, revolves around the use of tables and chairs in the traditional *gurdwara* dining hall. As one finds, however, the debate does not solely represent the preference or non-preference for furniture. It raises questions as to the role of tradition within a modern and secular society, and the divisions that are created as a result. Furthermore, as revealed through numerous interviews, many members within the community feel that the fight for tables and chairs really represents a fight for power and control of the very lucrative temples.

The *langar*, or community kitchen, is an important element within the Sikh *gurdwara*. Also called *Guru-Kaa-Langar*, the kitchen provides food to all devotees and visitors to the *gurdwara* and is meant to create and represent social equality.[42] This equality, fraternity, and brotherhood are all traits that are evident in the seating arrangement in the *langar*. According to Sikh belief, regardless of class or social status, all visitors to the *gurdwara* are to share the same food, sitting on the floor side by side. More traditional orthodox members feel adamantly that participants of the *langar* must consume the meal while seated on the floor (DePalma, 1997).

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[42] Often the term *langar* is also used to represent the actual meal that the congregation consumes. It is common, for example, to hear someone within the *gurdwara* say "please join us for *langar*."

Within the past decade, a growing number of *gurdwaras* have brought tables and chairs into *langar* halls, in order to accommodate the elderly and infirm. In 1997, the Guru Nanak Sikh temple was the scene of a violent confrontation between moderates and fundamentalists. Deeply orthodox members felt that the presence of furniture exploited the traditional act of meal consumption of the floor, where no one member sits higher than the rest. A bloody clash occurred when the latter group forcefully tried to remove the tables and chairs from the temple, while members of the moderate faction tried to place them back with equal determination. According to John Spellman, who is a professor of Asian Studies at the University of Windsor, "the fundamentalists basically forced the issue. They said, 'if you don't remove the tables and chairs we will'" (Spellman quoted in Neuman, 2003). The *langar* issue has virtually divided the entire Sikh nation into two, with each side accusing the other of heresy and conspiracy.

Interviews at several moderate *gurdwaras* in B.C., Manitoba, and Alberta reveal an interesting dimension, most often lacking in popular media regarding the tables and chairs edict. The issue of tables and chairs, interestingly enough, began in B.C. (and from there slowly spread throughout North America). During the height of the Khalistani movement, fundamentalist Sikhs had control over the majority of *gurdwaras*. According to Swami (1998:1), the replacement of fundamentalist rule with moderates "was caused by the realization that the

Khalistan movement had little support in India and allegations of financial misappropriation and embezzlement by far-right managements in the name of holy war." While there always existed several temples that utilized tables and chairs (without much contention from the fundamentalist faction) the moderates' takeover increased this number, and correspondingly, the controversy escalated.

On April 20, 1998, Ranjit Singh, who is a high-priest from Amritsar, issued a *hukamnama* (edict) stating that the use of tables and chairs in consuming *langar* was apostasy. Members of B.C.'s moderate community, however, were quick to proclaim conspiracy in the matter. Leaders of various moderate *gurdwaras* claim that the edict is not binding, as Ranjit Singh had made the decision with a minority consent of Sikh *Takhts*.[43] Furthermore, many moderate leaders remain suspicious of the edict and its timing. They believe that Ranjit Singh collaborated with the fundamentalist community in issuing a verdict that would inevitably weaken the moderates and strengthen the resolve of the fundamentalists (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004; Parmar, Lal [pseud.], 2004). Tara Singh Hayer (who was highly critical of the edict) stated that the high priest, Ranjit Singh, "wants once again that the fundamentalists capture *gurdwaras* and misuse offerings" (Hayer, quoted in Swami, 1998:2). This sentiment is echoed by others within the community who feel that the edict and the ensuing violence simply has been a ploy on the part of fundamentalists to create a stir within the community, with the ultimate intent of winning back control of temples (Mahal, Amandip [pseud.], 2004; Parmar, Lal [pseud.], 2004).

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[43] *Takht*, literally means throne, but in this case refers to centers of spiritual and temporal authority. In Sikhism there are five such centers, or *Takhts*. All issues concerning Sikhs are discussed in these centers, and must have majority consensus among the centers in order to become binding on all Sikhs globally.

The Sikh community continues to be plagued by the *langar* controversy. In the past several years, police have responded to calls from several temples in B.C.'s Lower Mainland, and at times were forced to close down the temples when violence and danger seemed imminent. Today on the back of a B.C. *gurdwara* dining hall, lined with white tables and folding chairs, hangs a sign that simply says, "Please use Tables & Chairs for eating Langar - Thank-you" (Nanaksar Gurdwara Gursikh, Richmond, B.C., please refer to appendix 13). In comparison, the *gurdwara* down the street has mats that have carefully been taped to the floor in perfect rows. Without the presence of furniture, the only decor in the vast hall is a long row of framed pictures depicting the brutal genocide of Sikhs, together wi[illegible]ign that reminds people to cover their heads while eating *langar* (Gur[illegible] Sahib Dasmesh Darbar, Surrey, B.C., please refer to appendix 12).

The existing division between members of the fundamentalist and moderate factions of Canada's Sikh community reaffirms the ideological differences that continue to survive despite spatial and temporal advancement. Members of the fundamentalist community continue to commit themselves to evoking, and by extension obliterating, the carnage that Sikhs in the Punjab suffer at the hands of the Indian government. In achieving this aim, some members of the Sikh fundamentalist community misuse various institutions, including the *gurdwara*, in order to fundraise for pro-Khalistani efforts. While fundamentalists, per se, are not innately violent (as Bhindranwale made clear), violence in the name of faith-protection is not only permissible, but essential. Arguably, Bhindranwale was the first to exploit this notion, but certainly there remain fundamentalist Sikhs, particularly in Canada, who adhere to this directive, and continue to fight in the name of their faith.

"The more martyrs, the better the nation. . . . [S]ome have to sacrifice so the rest will wake up. A Sikh is supposed to sacrifice everything for his religion. That is the basic teaching'" (quoted in Mulgrew, 1988:111).

Conclusion

The study of the Sikh community, particularly in Canada, provides invaluable lessons in notions and theories about fundamentalism. As Oberoi (1993) has stated, the case of Sikh fundamentalism is significant as it is currently in the process of production. Sikh fundamentalism, according to Oberoi (1993:257), "is an episteme that is still in the making, and its canon, ideology, objectives, and practices are being gradually defined. . . . [H]ere we can clearly see how a group of fundamentalists invent and reproduce themselves in the late twentieth century." Indeed, the relative recentness of the Sikh case, accompanied by the international nature of the movement, are unique factors within the study of fundamentalist movements, their causes, and their manifestations. Furthermore, the study of Sikh fundamentalism is crucial in validating many of the present theoretical notions of fundamentalism in general.

The aim of this study was to examine various facets of Sikh history, belief, and tradition in an attempt to explain current Sikh fundamentalist movements in Canada. Fundamentalism as a pronouncement of religious faith, together with the militant pursuit of autonomy, are not new phenomena within the Sikh tradition. Historical accounts indicate that processes of militancy and martyrdom (that inevitably fuel fundamentalist ideology) were in effect from the inception of the faith, irrevocably becoming idealized under the tenth and final guru of Sikhism, Gobind Singh. Historical patterns of Sikh immigration to Canada and the subsequent experiences of the early Sikh diaspora are crucial to later expressions of fundamentalist ideology. As this study suggests, the migration patterns of Sikhs to Canada, together with the presence of racial tensions and exclusionary practices in this country, shaped a tightly-knit diaspora community. Some members of this tightly-knit community eventually broke with tradition, and deviated from long-standing cultural norms, opting instead to embrace their new host nation and its cultural template. Wrought by this early divide, the Canadian-Sikh community continues to remain divisively split into two broad factions: the moderates and the fundamentalists.

The premise of present Sikh fundamentalist belief is a reflection of a tormented past. Inevitably, Sikh fundamentalism is a defense mechanism. Its at times violent appearance belies its genuine motivations--fear and anxiety. Sikh fundamentalists inevitably fear all (both people and practices) outside their sphere. Everything from secularists, secular society, Hindus, and lapsed Sikhs, to modernization, political ascendancy, and unorthodoxy creates an internal fear in the mind of the fundamentalists. While this anxiety is concentrated among a select few, it is important to bear in mind that fundamentalists see themselves as true Sikhs and protectors of the faith--an ideal that they believe all Sikhs should strive towards.

This ideological divide is detrimental to the community at large, resulting in allegations between the groups of missing funds, abuse of temple resources, and bloody clashes, together resulting in an on-going power struggle for money and resources. While many moderates are trying to reclaim what they believe to be funds stolen and misused by fundamentalists while the temples were under their control, fundamentalists conversely accuse moderates of heresy, of secularism, and of ignoring the present carnage of fellow Sikhs in the Punjab. Fundamentalists believe that usage of funds to finance pro-Khalistani efforts, and efforts to retain power over temples, reveals their high degree of piety. In following the mandates of Guru Gobind Singh, these individuals see themselves as true protectors of the faith, willing to sacrifice all for their beliefs, and striving towards fulfilling the divine concept of *miri/piri* by establishing an independent state.

I am writing this conclusion in the Fall of 2004, when the Air-India trial is in its final phases, and cases of violent outbreak between rival Sikh factions in Canada have diminished significantly. On the whole, incidents of Sikh fundamentalism and militancy appear to be on the decline. One wonders, however, if the rifts within the fundamentalist community have dispersed its members, or if the fundamentalists simply have gone underground, awaiting another critical period where once again they will surface and defend their beliefs. If my experiences in interviewing, and being closely associated with the Sikh community over a period of time reveal anything, it is that the answer to these questions are complicated.

In one scholar's opinion, Sikh fundamentalism will not be in a state of decline anytime soon. According to Madan, (1991:622) "as long as the relationship between religion and the state is defined in diametrically opposite ways in the Indian Constitution and by Sikh (and other) fundamentalists, the scope for reconciliation is limited." This opinion has merit at the communal level as well. Many members of Canada's moderate Sikhs believe that, while pro-Khalistani efforts have subsided in the past several years, the desire and longing for a separate country is not gone. "Many of them [fundamentalists] still see it [Khalistan] as . . . the . . . ideal. . . . They think that all true Sikhs should want this" (Parmar, Lal [pseud.], 2004). Despite this long-standing aspiration, however, cases of fundamentalist activities in Canada militant or otherwise have declined substantially since the late 1980s early 1990s.

Many within the moderate faction believe that the pursuit for Khalistan (from Canadian soil) has been forestalled in large part due to the change in temple power. Without the control of Canada's numerous and lucrative Sikh temples, many fundamentalists now simply do not have the resources available to plan and execute any activities. Furthermore, according to some within the community, with the recent onset of negative press aimed at fundamentalists, whether it was in association with temple confrontations, the Air-India trial, or the ongoing Babbar Khalsa Credit Union case, many within the faction may feel that their efforts at attracting attention to the Khalistan-cause have backfired, attracting negative awareness, instead of sympathy among many Canadians.

To presume, however, that Sikh fundamentalism in Canada has had its moment, and is slowly, but surely dying, is erroneous. One need only to set foot into a fundamentalist temple in the Lower Mainland to know that the moment's death simply has not occurred. Fundamentalist ideology exists, and it is fuelled continuously by the same fear and anxiety that it has always relied upon for its existence. Fundamentalists today still feel that their greatest enemy is two-fold--the secular government of India and the lapsed Sikhs. They still feel that there is only one correct way to practice the Sikh faith, and those who deviate from it are heretics. For these Sikhs, professing their faith through *khalsa* initiation and striving to protect the sanctity of their faith *at all costs* remains their highest goal. If they no longer have the resources or influence to promote an independent nation, then they still do not discard the idea of it. The huge banners that hang from fundamentalist *gurdwara* walls professing Khalistan as an independent homeland attest to this sentiment.

Sikh militant movements in Canada also have declined substantially. In part, this decline may be due to the Government of Canada's ban of several of them. Still, moderate members with the Canadian Sikh community remain skeptical of their disappearance, noting that many of them have simply gone underground. While outward militant actions may not be taking place, this lack of visibility has not put a stop to the dissemination of literature justifying and endorsing militant and fundamentalist views.[44]

So what of the future of Sikh fundamentalism in Canada? If fundamentalism is a reaction and a defence mechanism, then there is no doubt that fundamentalist belief in Canada remains contingent upon the condition of Sikhs and Sikhism in India. Just as the 1984 massacre of the Golden Temple in India re-invigorated the Sikh fundamentalist movement in Canada, it is plausible that potential future crimes committed against Sikhs and the Sikh faith will elicit a similar response. Given this defensive-reactionary nature of Sikh fundamentalism, it is crucial that future studies in the area must be circumstance-sensitive. Furthermore, there still remains a great need for clarification of language and definition. Future studies in the area of Sikh fundamentalism need to question the appropriateness of terms such as 'moderates,' 'fundamentalists,' and 'militants.' If, in the view of many, individuals such as Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and Talwinder Singh Parmar were militants, fundamentalists, and terrorists, then what did they view themselves as? It is important to recognize that the quick application of terms on people and procedures may in fact hinder high-quality scholarship. Surely, men such as Parmar and Bhindranwale saw themselves as devout Sikhs, righteous upholders of the faith, and followers of the teachings of the gurus. Acknowledgement and explanation of this very important self-understanding remains a challenge for future studies.

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[44] Incidentally, one of the most recognized of these pro-fundamentalist publications is based out of Edmonton, Alberta under the name of the *Sikh Educational Trust*.

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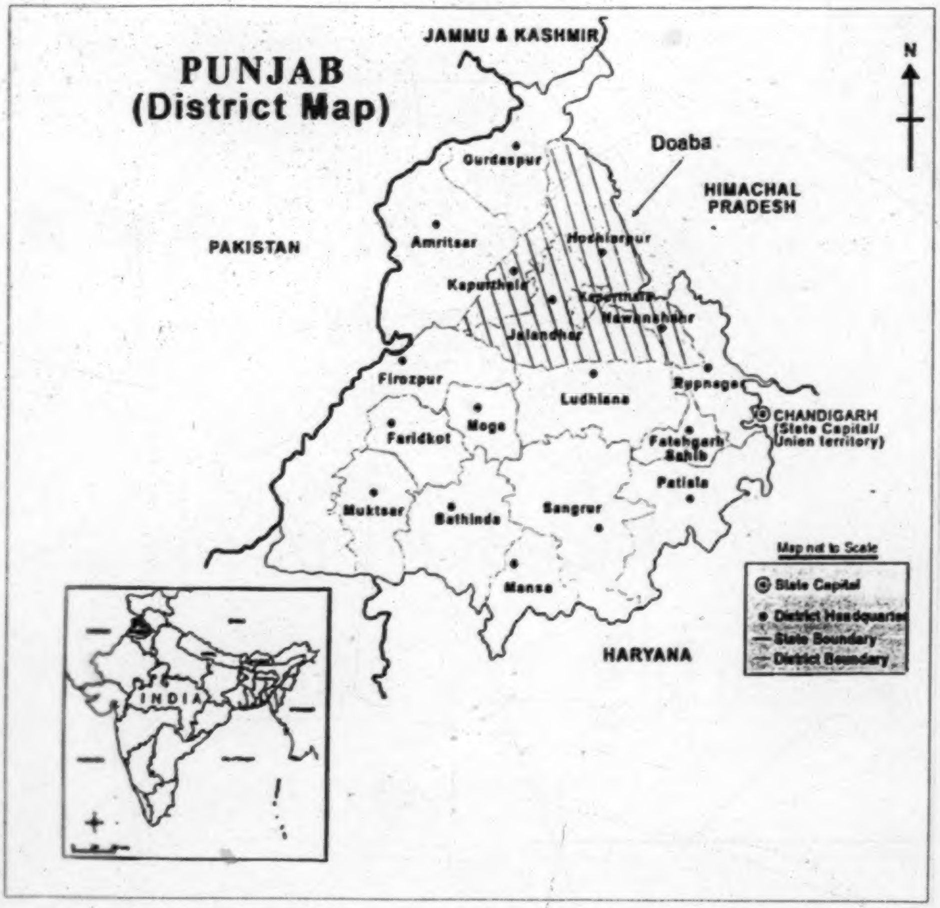
Appendix 1

Map of Punjab Region


PUNJAB
(District Map)
JAMMU & KASHMIR
N
Doaba
HIMACHAL PRADESH
PAKISTAN
Gurdaspur
Amritsar
Hoshiarpur
Kapurthala
Kapurthala
Nawanshahr
Jalandhar
Firozpur
Ludhiana
Rupnagar
CHANDIGARH
(State Capital/
Union territory)
Moga
Faridkot
Fatehgarh Sahib
Patiala
Muktsar
Bathinda
Sangrur
Mansa
HARYANA
Map not to Scale
State Capital
District Headquarte
State Boundary
District Boundary
INDIA

Source: www.worldatlas.com

Appendix 2

Komagata Maru Dedications

On May 23, 1914, 376 British Subjects (12 Hindus, 24 Muslims and 340 Sikhs) of Indian origin arrived in Vancouver harbour aboard the Komagata Maru, seeking to enter Canada. 352 of the passengers were denied entry and forced to depart on July 23, 1914. This plaque commemorates the 75th anniversary of that unfortunate incident of racial discrimination and reminds Canadians of our commitment to an open society in which mutual respect and understanding are honoured, differences are respected, and traditions are cherished.

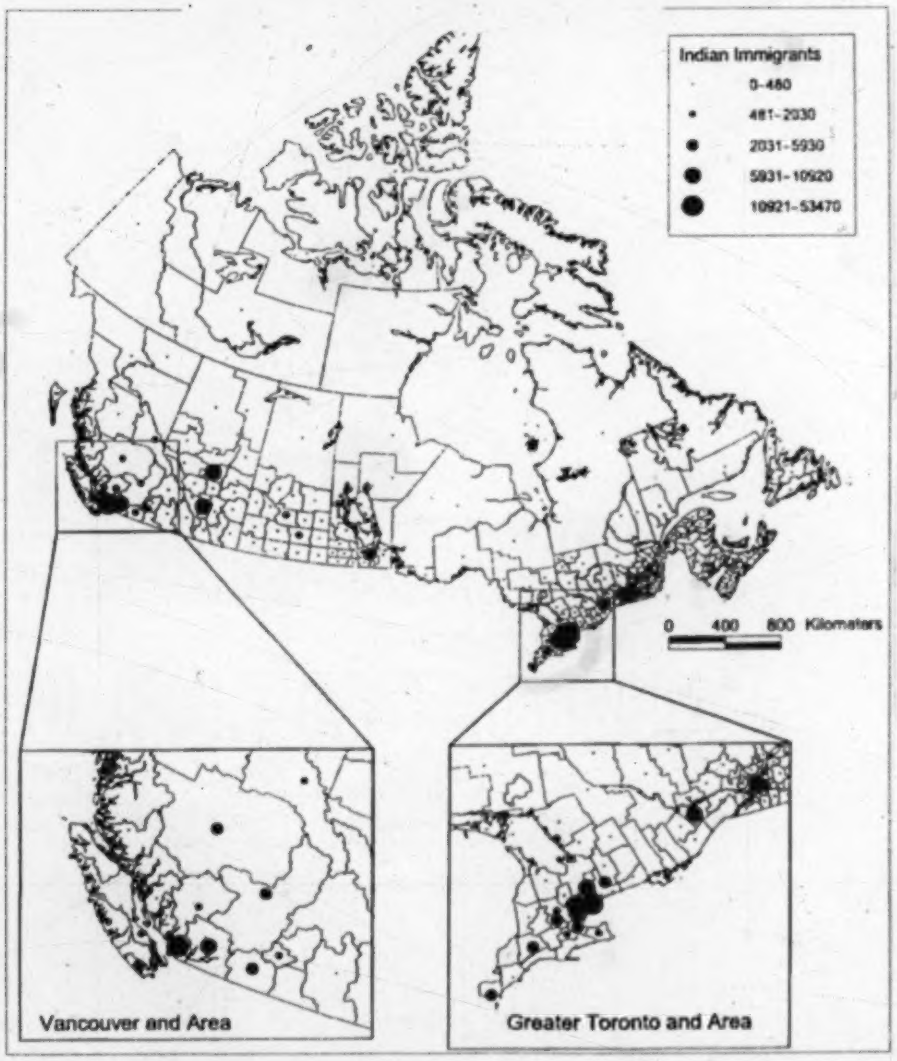
Plaque at the Gateway to the Pacific, Downtown Vancouver.

Komagata Maru Incident 75th Anniversary. Dedicated to the memory of the 376 passengers (340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, 12 Hindus) who arrived at Burrard Inlet, Vancouver on May 23, 1914, from the Indian sub-continent on the ship Komagata Maru (Guru Nanak Jahaz). Due to the racist immigration policy of the Dominion of Canada, they were forced to leave on July 23, 1914. Khalsa Diwan Society, Vancouver, pays respect to those passengers by commemorating the reprehensible incident.

Plaque in the Ross Street Gurdwara, Dedicated July 23, 1989.

Appendix 3

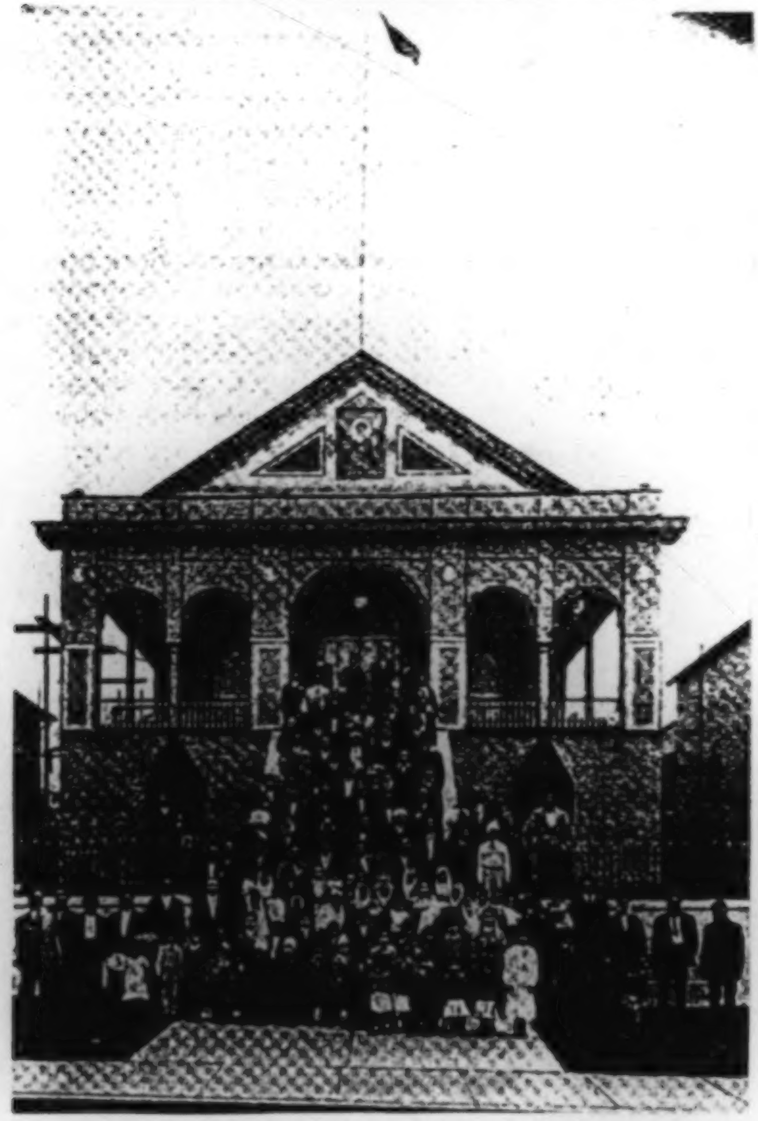
Indian Immigration Settlement Patterns in Canada


Indian Immigrants
● 0-480
● 481-2030
● 2031-5930
● 5931-10920
● 10921-53470
0 400 800 Kilometers
Vancouver and Area
Greater Toronto and Area

Source: www.statscan.ca (community profiles); Walton Roberts (2003:241).

Appendix 4

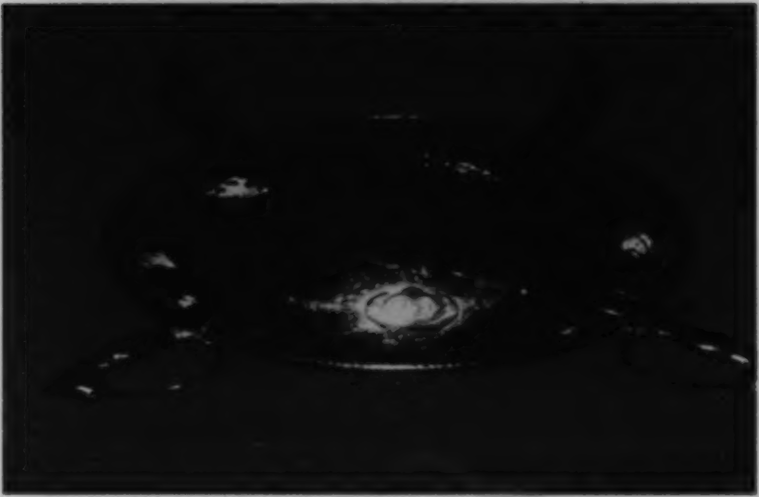
Vancouver's First Gurdwara (West 2nd Ave).



Courtesy of the Vancouver Public Library

Appendix 5

Swords on display at the front of the prayer hall at the
Sri Guru Singh Sabha Society, Edmonton.
(Maryam Razavy, 2004)



Double swords representing the twin powers of miri and piri.
Sri Guru Singh Sabha Society, Edmonton. (Maryam Razavy, 2004)

Appendix 6

Swords on display in front of prayer hall. Sri Guru Singh Sabha Society, Edmonton. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).

Kirpan, Sikh ceremonial dagger. Sri Guru Singh Sabha Society, Edmonton. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).

Appendix 7

Major Sikh Militant Activities in Canada

- March 1982, Toronto. Kuldip Singh Samra opened fire in a Toronto courtroom killing two. Samra, who managed to flee the building and the country following the shooting, was on trial over a dispute regarding elections at a local Toronto *gurdwara*. Canadian authorities charged Samra with two counts of first degree murder and two counts of attempted murder in connection to the shooting, and issued a Canada wide warrant for his arrest. Eventually he was detained in India in 1990 and extradited to Canada in 1992 (Hadzipedros, 2003).
- June 22, 1985. Air India Flight 182 exploded off the coast of Ireland. 329 people were killed--the majority of them are Canadian citizens. Among those implicated in the crime are: Talwinder Singh Parmar (who later had charges dropped), Inderjit Singh Reyat, Ajaib Singh Bagri, and Ripudaman Singh Malik. The investigation and trial is the longest and most expensive in Canadian legal history (Hadzipedros, 2003; Mulgrew, 1988).
- November 1985, Vancouver. Arjinder Pal Singh Sekhon (a powerful Sikh religious leader) rallied support at the Ross Street *gurdwara* in Vancouver by making a passionate speech about state terrorism by the Indian government against the Sikhs. Sekhon was also responsible for making an arms trade in the United Kingdom. According to sources, he instructed all

ISYF cells in Canada, the UK, and the U.S. to raise funds to finance the deal (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004; Jiwa, 1986).

- 1985, Vancouver, B.C. Ujjal Dosanjh (ex-B.C. premier, current federal Health Minister) was beaten up in the parking lot outside his law office by a man wielding an iron bar. The incident followed Dosanjh's public condemnation of Sikh extremists. A man was charged and acquitted. No one else has ever been prosecuted.
- May 1986, New York City. Five Montreal-area Sikhs were arrested on charges of conspiracy to commit an indictable offense. Three of the five were released after a one-month term in prison, while the other two were found guilty of the offenses and sentenced to life in prison (Hadzipedros, 2003).
- May 1987, Vancouver Island. Four ISYF members were convicted for a 1986 assassination attempt on the life of Malkiat Singh Sidhu, a visiting Punjabi cabinet minister. All four were sentenced to twenty years in prison. Five others were also charged with the attempted murder of the cabinet minister but the charges were dropped when it was disclosed that CSIS forged an affadavit in order to attain a wiretap warrant against one of the suspects. Later the minister was slain in India (Hadzipedros, 2003).
- May 1987. Satinder Pal Singh, a principal leader of the ISYF in Canada secured arms in Lahore, Pakistan and sold them to the Khalistan Liberation Force. Proceeds from the sale went to the ISYF in Canada (International Sikh Youth Federation [ISYF], 2004).

- November 1998, Vancouver, B.C. Tara Singh Hayer, outspoken critic of violent Sikh fundamentalism and publisher of the Punjabi-language paper Indo-Canadian Times, was shot dead in his garage. An assassination attempt earlier in the same year had left Hayer paralyzed from the waist down. Authorities convicted Harkirat Singh Bagga (who police have linked with the ISYF as well as the Babbar Khalsa) in the attack (<http://www.cpj.org/protests/98ltrs/canada10dec98.html>).
- February 2003, Vancouver, B.C. Inderjit Singh Reyat pled guilty to a single count of manslaughter in connection to the 1985 bombing of Air India Flight 1982. Reyat was sentenced to an additional five years in prison. In 1991 he was sentenced to ten years in prison in connection to the 1985 explosion of a bomb and Tokyo's Narita Airport. Ajaib Singh Bagri and Ripudaman Singh Malik remain on trial in B.C. on charges in the Air India bombing.

Appendix 8

Canada's Security Information Act

The Charities Registration (Security Information) Act is enacted by section 113 of chapter 41 of the Statutes of Canada, 2001, in force 24 December, 2001. The new legislation is aimed at curbing terrorist fundraising while preserving the "integrity of Canada's charities registration system" by preventing groups affiliated or implicated in terrorist activities from obtaining charity status ("Security Information Act--Federal Government Introduces the New Charities Registration," 2001).

The Charities Registration Security Information Act is meant to uphold Canada's G-8 commitments to "investigate charitable organizations where it is believed that an organization is being used by terrorists as a cover for other activities." In addition, the act is meant to "prevent the financing of terrorist organizations indirectly through organizations that have, or claim to have, charitable goals." Also, the act addresses the 1999 Report of the Special Senate Committee on Security and Intelligence, which stated that terrorist groups fundraise in Canada, often using "benevolent or philanthropic organizations as fronts" ("Security Information Act--Federal Government Introduces the New Charities Registration," 2001).

Prior to its enactment, the Department of the Solicitor General of Canada stated that the legislation would operate in the following manner:

- In reviewing new applications and assessing registered charities' compliance with the Income Tax Act, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) would have access to information provided by CSIS and the RCMP to identify organizations that raise security concerns.
- If CSIS or the RCMP possessed strong and credible evidence that an organization operates in support of terrorist organizations, that information would be referred to the Minister of National Revenue and the Solicitor General for their consideration.
- If, after personally reviewing the information, the Ministers had reasonable grounds to believe that the organization makes or will make resources available to terrorism, they would both sign a certificate to that effect. If both Ministers signed the certificate, the applicant would be provided with notice of the certificate and the matter would be automatically referred to the Federal Court for judicial review. The applicant would have the opportunity to apply to the Federal Court to have its identity protected during the judicial review process.
- To ensure due process and fairness, the Federal Court would provide the applicant with an opportunity to introduce evidence, call witnesses, and cross-examine in a public forum. After reviewing the classified information *in camera*, the judge would provide the organization with a summary of the classified information in question. The summary would contain sufficient information to allow the organization to respond, but would exclude information that the judge has determined would be injurious to national security and the safety of persons.

- The CCRA could not deny or revoke the organization's charitable status unless a Federal Court judge confirmed the certificate. If confirmed, the certificate would be valid for three years, subject to review if there has been a change in material circumstances of the organization ("Security Information Act--Federal Government Introduces the New Charities Registration," 2001).

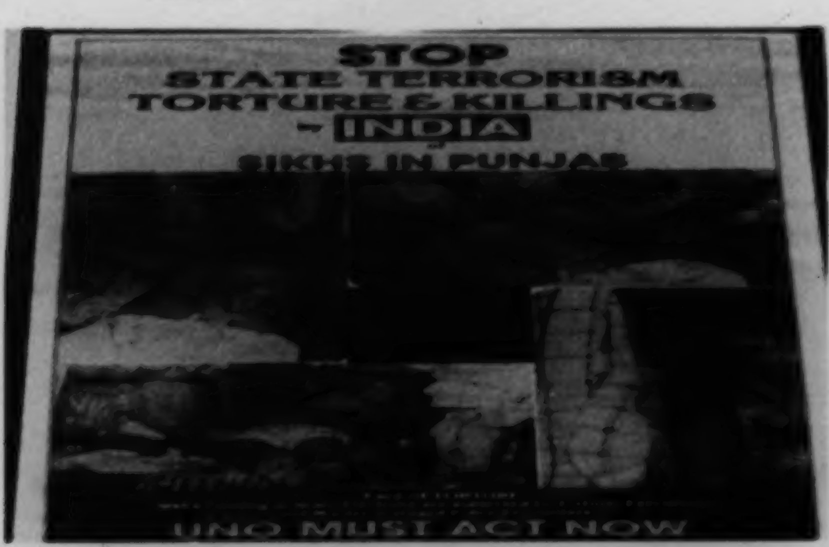
Appendix 9

Community Donations to Vancouver Khalsa Diwan Society before 1921

1. To sufferers from massacres	$ 4,330
2. To families of political prisoners	$2,100
3. To sufferers from political causes	$30,700
4. To Congress Tilak Swaraj fund	$3,333
5. To religious and educational causes	$148,000
6. To Komogata Maru case	$50,000
7. To immigration cases	$30,000
8. To deputations to Canadian and British Governmentts	$12,000
9. To Hindustani Press in Canada	$15,000
	Total $295,463

(Courtesy of: Becoming Canadian <http://collections.ic.gc.ca/sikh/s6.html> - Section 5, page 3).

Appendix 10

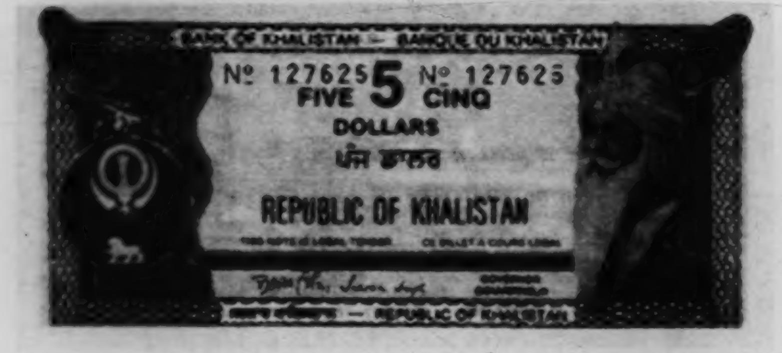

STOP
STATE TERRORISM
TORTURE & KILLINGS
- INDIA -
SIKHS IN PUNJAB
UNO MUST ACT NOW

Example of 'Martyr Pictures' in Fundamentalist Temple, Surrey, B.C. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).

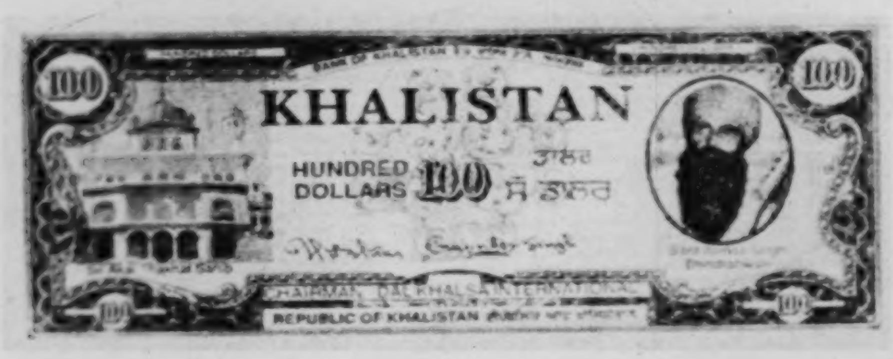
'Wall of Martyrs' - Fundamentalist Temple, Surrey, B.C. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).

Appendix 11

Khalistani Flag. <http://flagspot.net/flags/in-khal.html>


BANK OF KHALISTAN — BANQUE DU KHALISTAN
Nº 127625
5
Nº 127625
FIVE
CINQ
DOLLARS
REPUBLIC OF KHALISTAN
REPUBLIC OF KHALISTAN

Khalistani Currency. <http://aes.iupui.edu/rwise/countries/pakistan.html>


100
100
KHALISTAN
HUNDRED
DOLLARS
100
CHAIRMAN, DAL KHALSA INTERNATIONAL
REPUBLIC OF KHALISTAN
100
100

Appendix 12

"Long Live Khalistan" banner. Edmonton, Alberta. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).

Langar Hall - Fundamentalist Temple, Surrey, B.C. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).

Appendix 13

COUNTER PLEASE

Sign in Langar Hall. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).
Tables and Chairs in Langar Hall at Moderate
Temple, Surrey, B.C. (Maryam Razavy, 2004).